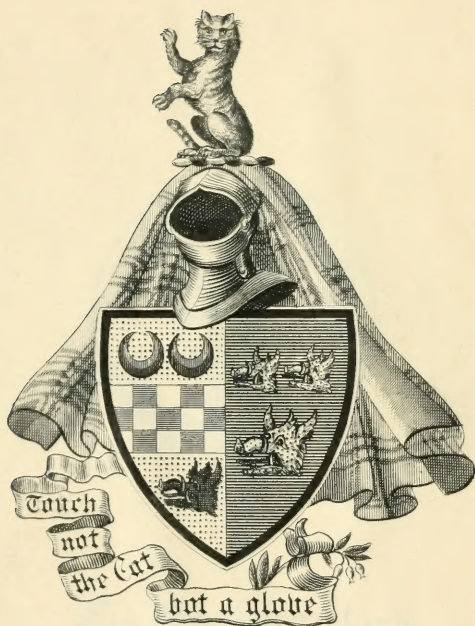


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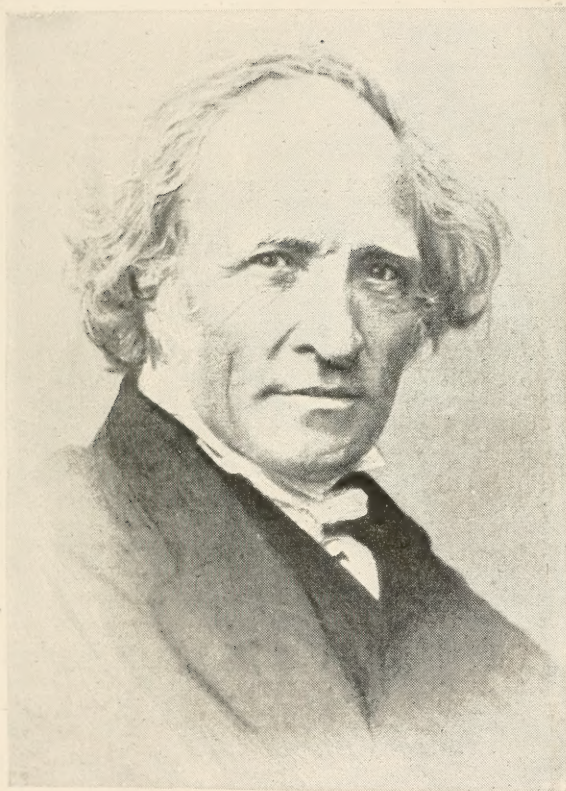





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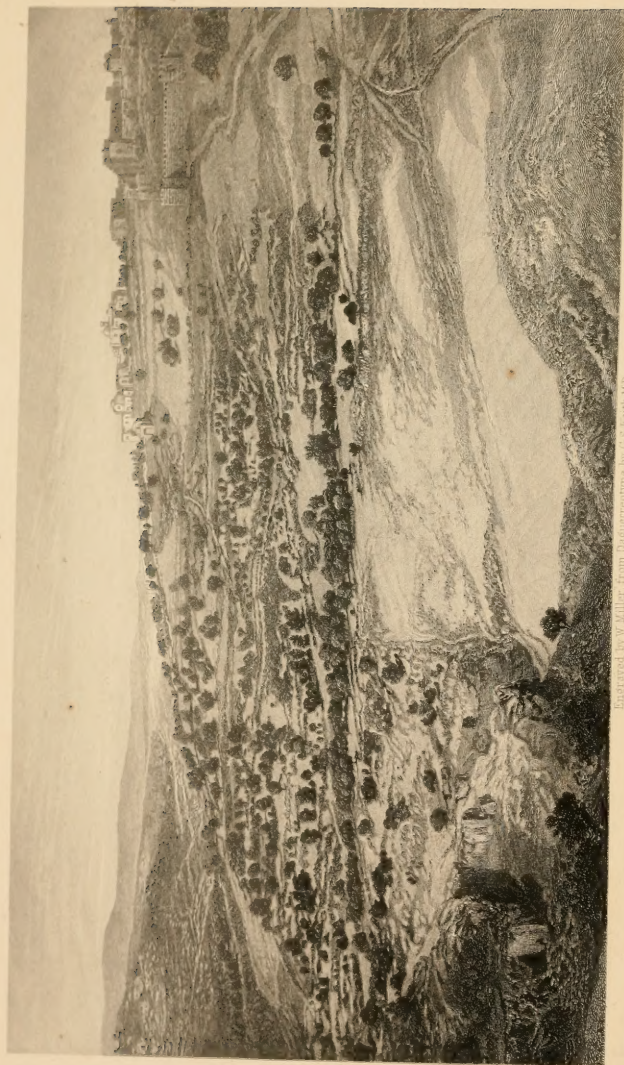
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EVIDENCE

OF THE

TRUTH OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

DERIVED FROM THE

LITERAL FULFILMENT OF PROPHECY;

PARTICULARLY AS ILLUSTRATED BY THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS, AND
BY THE DISCOVERIES OF RECENT TRAVELLERS.

WITH A REFUTATION OF THE REV. A. P. STANLEY'S POETICAL INTERPRETATIONS.

BY

ALEXANDER KEITH, D.D.

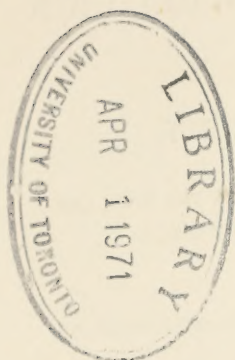
Thirty-seventh Edition, much Enlarged.

WITH DAGUERREOTYPE VIEWS.

Opinionum commenta dies delet, Naturæ judicia confirmat.—Cic. De Nat. Deo.

LONDON:
T. NELSON AND SONS, PATERNOSTER ROW;
EDINBURGH; AND NEW YORK.

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PREFACE

TO

THE THIRTY-SIXTH EDITION.

IN searching for facts alone, in illustration of prophecies, it has uniformly been the Author's endeavour to adduce the most unexceptionable and conclusive evidence; and hence unbelievers, condemned out of their own mouths, have in general been the leading witnesses. As soon as photography began to take its place among the wonderful arts or inventions of the present day, he anticipated a mode of demonstration that could neither be questioned nor surpassed; as, without the need of any testimony, or the aid of either pen or pencil, the rays of the sun would thus depict what the prophets saw. With this intent, on his first visit to the East, he took with him some calotype paper, &c., the mode of preparing which was then secret; but on reaching Syria it was wholly useless. Then engaged in another object, he passed within an hour of Ashkelon and another of Tyre, without seeing either. A second visit to Syria, accompanied by one of his sons, Dr G. S. Keith, Edinburgh, by whom the daguerreotype views were taken, enables him now to adduce such proof; and has led besides to such an enlargement of the evidence from manifold additional facts, as he fain hopes may impart that lesson to others with which his own mind has been impressed,—a still deeper conviction of the defined precision of the *sure word of prophecy*.

P R E F A C E

TO

THE THIRTY-SEVENTH EDITION.

IN previous editions the Author had thankfully to acknowledge his obligations to Captains Irby and Mangles for their printed, but then unpublished, "Travels in Syria;" and also to General Straton, Lord Claude Hamilton, and Count Pourtallis, for the use of their valuable Journals. He has now to own a similar obligation to Cyril C. Graham, Esq., who kindly gave him the manuscripts of his "Explorations East of the Hauran," which he had read to the Royal Geographical Society, and which will speedily appear in their Transactions. He penetrated farther into that region than any previous traveller, and was the first to visit other *forsaken* cities there, besides Beth-gamul, which occupies as large a space as Jerusalem, and of which the houses and streets are entire, but in which *no man dwells*. New illustrations are also added from the published works of other recent travellers; and the means of information are now so abundant from what they were when this treatise was first published, that there is now a Handbook of Syria.

In the last of the previous editions, and still more in the present, the scriptural connection is marked between those prophecies concerning Palestine which have become accomplished facts, and other predictions of propitious import, which wait for their fulfilment in *the appointed time*.

Scripture thus presents an obvious refutation of the fallacy that the period of their completion is past, or that the *desolations of many generations*, which shall be *raised up*, have come to an end, while these desolations still continue.

For years past the Author has been occupied in preparing for the press a new work, entitled "*The History and Destiny of the World and of the Church, according to Scripture.*" It pertains to Prophetic History, more especially, to show for what *cause* these desolations have come, and by what Powers they have been effected. No fragmentary view, however complete within itself, can fully show "the whole counsel of God," as revealed in his word, concerning these things; but, when seen in the connection which Scripture assigns them, each separate part becomes then illustrative of the rest. There is a converging-point for them all; but the terminus at which the testimony of all the prophets finally rests, is the *restitution of all things*, of the times of which God hath spoken by them all.¹

¹ Acts iii. 21.

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REFUTATION

OF THE

REV. A. P. STANLEY'S POETICAL INTERPRETATIONS.

At a time when, in his youth, the author of the following treatise, engaged in other duties, had no thought of ever writing a book, he was led into a long discussion with a stanch Humist on the Evidences of Christianity. Foiled in every attempt to make the slightest impression on the mind of his sceptical opponent, who rejected all testimony as incompetent to prove a miracle, and who could not appreciate the internal evidences,—he said at last, when excluded from the use of other proof, that the inspiration of Scripture could be proved from existing facts. The answer was, “Ah! I thought that you Christians said that the age of miracles is past.” “Yes,” it was replied, “but the age of the fulfilment of prophecy is not past.” The ready response was, “Heads! horns! tails! wings! dragons!” &c. “Poetical interpretations” of figurative prophecies would only have given farther scope to the scoffer; and, little versant as he then was with the subject, the writer knew enough of *the Ruins* of Volney, and of modern discoveries, to enable him to appeal, without any interpretation, to existing geographical facts, as well as to the present condition of the Jewish race, as literal fulfilments of prophecies, whereby God, as of old, had *confirmed his words*. The sceptic was triumphant no longer; and Hume’s argument was of no avail; but in altered tone he was constrained to say, “I cannot answer you.” His *mouth was stopped*, as that of every sceptic ought to be. Thirty-six years have passed away since this treatise, which thus originated, was first published. It has been repeatedly stereotyped, and extensively circulated in Britain and the colonies—often reprinted in America—translated into various languages of Europe and Asia—and the evidence of the inspiration of Scripture from existing facts is not now unknown: yet no answer or refutation, so far as the writer is aware, has ever appeared from the pen of any sceptic. Dr Barth of Wurtemberg said to him in Stutgardt, “Our Rationalists are very

angry with you, because they cannot answer you." Something, however, in the form of an "argument" against the literal fulfilment of prophecy, worthy of a Note, has at length appeared from an unexpected quarter; for what the German Rationalists could not do, or have not done, an English clergyman can attempt, by substituting "poetical interpretations" for the literal fulfilment of prophecy.

There are two opposite modes of dealing with confessedly "Divine Revelations"—either casting down imaginations before them, or vainly exalting high imaginations above them; either believing "all that the prophets have spoken," or attaching a different meaning to their words than that which they expressly bear.

Mr Stanley justly says, "If we have no warrant to take away, we have no warrant to add."¹ It is equally true that if we have no warrant to add, we have no warrant to take away. By this sole standard of scriptural truth his theory, and every other which professedly or indirectly appeals to Scripture, has to be tried. "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it," and "thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it" (Deut. iv. 2; xii. 32). The last warning of Scripture is, "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things—if any man shall take away from the words," &c. (Rev. xxii. 18, 19). "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. viii. 20). The testimony is maintained in its integrity, when nothing

¹ This is said in reference to the Mosaic record of the wanderings of the Israelites in the wilderness for forty years. "The question is asked, 'How could a tribe, so numerous and powerful, as on any hypothesis the Israelites must have been, be maintained in the inhospitable desert?' It is no answer to say that they were sustained by miracles (!) for, except the manna, the quails, and the three interventions in regard to water, none such are mentioned in the Mosaic history; and if we have no warrant to take away, we have no warrant to add."—*Stanley's Sinai and Palestine*, p. 25. In the Mosaic history it is recorded that "the Lord said unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall gather a certain rate every day. . . . And Moses said—The Lord shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full. They gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating. . . . And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years," &c. (Exod. xvi. 4, 8, 21, &c.) "And thou shalt remember all the way which JEHOVAH THY GOD led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments or no. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live. [That was the lesson which the Israelites had to learn.] Thy raiment waxed not old," &c. (Deut. viii. 2-4). It is an answer which Scripture gives, that they were "sustained" by miracles. "Yea, forty years didst Thou sustain them in the wilderness, so that they lacked nothing" (Neh. ix. 21). "Yea, they spake against God; they said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed. . . . He had rained down manna upon them—He sent them meat to the full" (Ps. lxxviii. 19, 20, 24, 25). "He brought them out, after that he had showed wonders and signs (σημεια, miracles) in the land of Egypt, and in the Red Sea, and in the wilderness forty years" (Acts vii. 36). The same Greek word is applied also in the New Testament to the miracles of Christ.

is added unto it, and nothing taken away. The entrance of the word gives light. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead," Luke xvi. 31. After Christ's own resurrection from the dead, he said, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken," Luke xxiv. 25.

The prophets themselves show of what they have spoken. "A fact is worth a thousand arguments." No fiction can disprove a fact; and no argument can prove that a fact is a fiction. It is a fact that the denunciations of the prophets expressly include *lands* and *cities*, *buildings*, *walls*, *houses*, *sanctuaries*, *fortresses*, &c., as well as kingdoms and nations; though these judgments came because of the transgressions of men.

In the judgments denounced against the Israelites, if they would not hearken unto the Lord, but walk contrary unto him, it is written, "I will make your *cities* waste, and bring your *sanctuaries* into desolation.—And I will scatter you among the heathen—and your *land* shall be *desolate*, and your *cities* *waste*. Then shall the land enjoy her Sabbaths, *as long* as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even *then* shall the land rest, &c. And yet for all that—I will not cast them away—to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am Jehovah their God. But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors,"¹ &c. Fifteen hundred years after the days of Moses, the apostle Paul, looking forward to the time when—as he marks the distinction between "the Jews" and "the Gentiles"—*all Israel shall be saved*,—the proof he urged to believing men was an appeal to Scripture, "*As it is written*,—For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance"² (change of purpose). Addressing unbelieving Jews, he said, "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Hearing ye shall hear, and not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive—for their eyes they have closed—lest they should see, and should be converted, and I should heal them."³ Concerning this predicted and still continued blindness of Israel, Isaiah said, "Lord, *how long?*" and the answer was, "*Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man*,"⁴ &c. It is written again by the same prophet, "Upon the *land* of my people shall come up thorns and briers; yea, upon all the *houses* of joy in the joyous city. Because the *palaces* shall be forsaken; the multitude of the city shall be left;

¹ Lev. xxvi. 31–34, 43–45.² Rom. xi. 26, 29.³ Acts xxviii. 25–28.⁴ Isa. vi. 11.

the *forts and towers* shall be for dens for ever,—UNTIL the spirit shall be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field,”¹ &c. “They shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, *the desolations of many generations*,”² &c.—“*Against Moab* thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel. . . . The *cities* thereof shall be desolate, *without any to dwell therein*.—And judgment is come upon the plain country; upon Holon, and upon Jahazah, and upon Mephaath, and upon Dibon, and upon Nebo, and upon Beth-diblathaim, and upon Kiriathaim, and upon Beth-gamul, and upon Beth-meon, and upon Kerioth, and upon Bozrah, and upon all the cities of the land of Moab, *far or near*.”³ “Moab shall be a perpetual desolation: the residue of my people shall spoil them, and the remnant of my people shall possess them.”⁴ “I will make Rabbah a stable for camels, and the Ammonites a couching-place for flocks.”⁵ “Concerning Edom, thus saith the Lord of hosts,—all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes.”⁶ The word that the Lord spake *against Babylon*, and the land of the Chaldeans.—How is Babylon become a desolation among the nations.—Hear ye the counsel of Jehovah, that he hath taken *against Babylon*; and his purposes, that he hath purposed *against the land* of the Chaldeans.—Behold I am *against thee*, O destroying mountain. Cast her up as *heaps*,—*Babylon* shall become *heaps*. The *broad walls of Babylon* shall be utterly broken.—Thus shall that great city *Babylon* be thrown down.”⁷ These testimonies, besides many others, may suffice to show that the word of God went forth *against cities*, and sanctuaries, and palaces, and forts and towers, and houses and walls, &c.

This might seem to be an incontestable truth. But it is a truth which accords not with “the poetical interpretation of the prophecies;” and hence it is set aside. Poetical interpretations, and the literal fulfilment of prophecy, are confessedly antagonistic, and cannot both be maintained.

“Prophecy,” says Butler, “is nothing but the history of events before they come to pass: doctrines also are matters of fact.”⁸ It is as *matters of fact* that prophecies, when fulfilled, are evidences of inspiration. In recording the words of Jehovah, Isaiah says, “Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring up I tell you of them. Beside me there is no

¹ Isa. xxxii. 13–15.

² Isa. lxi. 4.

³ Jer. xlviii. 1, 21–24.

⁴ Zeph. ii. 9.

⁵ Ezek. xxxv. 5.

⁶ Jer. xlii. 7, 13.

⁷ Jer. l. 1, 23, 26, 45; li. 37, 58, 61.

⁸ Butler's Analogy, p. 2, c. 7.

⁹ Isa. xliii. 9.

God. And who, *as I*, shall declare it, and set in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them."¹ "My word that goeth out of my mouth shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish *that which I please*, and prosper in *the thing* whereunto I sent it."²

Mr Mansel's recent and timely work on "The Limits of Religious Thought," shows how Oxford can now boast of a second Butler, in his so triumphantly turning the arguments of Rationalists against themselves. He well says, "The instant we undertake to say that this or that speculative or practical interpretation is the *only real meaning* of what Scripture represents to us under a *different* image, we abandon at once the supposition of an accommodation to the necessary limits of human thought, and virtually admit that the ulterior significance of the representation falls as much within those limits as the representation itself. Thus interpreted, the principle no longer offers the slightest safeguard against Rationalism: nay, it becomes identified with the fundamental vice of Rationalism itself; that of explaining away what we are unable to comprehend."³ The same able logician says again: "Nothing is gained by getting rid of inspiration, so long as a fragment of the supernatural is permitted to remain. It is only when we assume, *à priori*, that the supernatural is impossible, that anything is gained by forcing the prophetic language into a different meaning."⁴

It is forcing the prophetic language into a different sense, so to limit it as to exclude its application to those things of which the prophets have expressly spoken. But while Mr S. assigns a double sense and different significancy to prophecies, which expressly apply to the final *victory over death*, at the resurrection of the dead,⁵ he strives to prove, against the manifest fact, that prophecies against cities, "were not aimed *against* stocks and stones, but *always* against *living* souls and sins;"⁶ "not *against* the walls and houses, but against those who dwell within them;"⁷ not against "the actual buildings and sites of the cities," which, he says, is "mistaken in idea;"⁸ and his argument,—which itself, as subsequently shown, is founded on a fiction,—is for the "poetical, as distinct from the literal and prosaic, accomplishment of the prophetical Scriptures."⁹

¹ Isa. xlv. 6, 7, ² Isa. lv. 11.

³ Mansel's Bampton Lectures, p. 262.

⁴ Ibid. p. 416.

⁵ Sinai and Palestine, Pref. xvi.

⁶ Ibid. p. 377.

⁷ Ibid. p. 366.

⁸ Ibid. p. 367.

⁹ The apostle Paul, in quoting prophecies, while testifying of the resurrection of the dead, says, "When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" But surely it is to force the prophetic language into a different meaning, to say that "the passage in Isa. xxv. 8, [*He* (Jehovah of hosts) will swallow up death in victory], in its primary application refers to

How "prosaic," therefore, and "mistaken in idea," on such a supposition, must the words of Jesus have been when, on his disciples saying unto him, "Master, see what manner of *stones* and what *buildings* are here," he said, "Seest thou *these great buildings*? There shall not be left one *stone* upon another, that shall not be thrown down."¹ Were these great buildings "living souls," and were all the stones of them "living souls," of which not one was to be left upon another? If so, how "mistaken in idea," even in believing Christ's own words, must the apostles have been when they asked him privately, "When shall *these things* be?" Or, rather, as the only alternative, is not Mr Stanley's theory mistaken in idea?

In like manner was it the city of Samaria, or those who dwelt within it, that were to become as an heap of the field, and "the foundations thereof" to be discovered? or was it prosaically the *stones* or poetically the living souls of that city, that were to be cast into the valley? Whether was it *the stones, and the timber, and the dust* of the city of Tyre, as it existed in the days of the prophets, or of the living souls within it, that were to be cast into the midst of the sea, and, bare as the top of a rock, to become there a place for the *spreading of nets*? (see below.) Was it Babylon, or they that dwelt therein, against which *this* word of the Lord went forth: Babylon shall become *heaps*,—its broad *walls* shall be utterly broken? Was it Rabbah, the capital of Ammon, or the living souls within it, that was to be made a *stable for camels*? Of cities of Israel, and also of Moab, do the words, "The cities shall be forsaken, and not a man dwell therein," imply that the inhabitants were to *leave* the cities, or the cities to leave the inhabitants? When Moses said to the people Israel in the name of Jehovah, I will make *your cities* waste, and when other prophets foretold "the desolations of many generations" that shall be raised up again, did they mean, as they said, the cities themselves, or "the living souls and sins of men?"

Judgments against cities, always because of sins, have *left their marks*; whilst they who dwelt therein in ages past, have long gone to their own account, and left no testimony behind them. But cities

the deliverance of Israel (apparently from Sennacherib,) and "the quotation from Hosea xiii. 14, which in its original sense applies to the deliverance of the northern kingdom from its troubles, is in the Hebrew,—I will be thy plagues, O death; I will be thy destruction, O grave."* The words of the prophets and the testimony of the apostle alike shew *when* these prophecies *shall* be brought to pass; and that they do not apply in a primary or original sense to the deliverance of Israel, apparently from Sennacherib—from whom *Israel* was not delivered—or to the deliverance of the northern kingdom, in any past age.

¹ Mark xiii. 1, 2. Matt. xxiv. 1, 2.

* Stanley on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians. Note on 1 Cor. xv. 54, 55.

and their sites, whether still existing and forsaken, or desolate heaps, are evidences to this day that the word which went forth against them is that of Jehovah. Thus, after describing these judgments, it is often said, *They shall know that I am Jehovah.*

The supernatural is manifested in prophecies as it was in miracles, when, according to the prophetic language itself, the time is come in which they have received their accomplishment. In the words of Hume, "all prophecies are real miracles; and as such only can be admitted as proof of any Revelation." Such an admission no sceptic would ever make, in regard to poetical interpretations. But the same author who says in respect to the question, How could the Israelites be maintained in the desert? that "it is no answer to say that they were sustained by miracles," though Scripture shows that they were, (see preceding note)—and who affirms that prophecies which shall be brought to pass in the final "victory" over death and the grave, have their primary application to deliverances of old; and who, moreover, denies that literal prophecies were uttered against cities—can consistently speak of "those prophecies which are *supposed* to be future," and of "the *supposed* fulfilment of the ancient prophecies by the appearance which some of the sites of Syrian or Arabian cities present to the modern traveller," while the proof of what would be an evidence of the inspiration of the prophets, he seems, at least, to attribute to "involuntary exaggeration or invention."

In the preface to his "Sinai and Palestine, in Connection with their History," Mr Stanley thus introduces his first reference to prophecy:—

"Those who visit or who describe the scenes of sacred history expressly for the sake of finding confirmations of Scripture, are often tempted to mislead themselves and others by involuntary exaggeration or invention. But this danger ought not to prevent us from thankfully welcoming any such evidences as can truly be found to the faithfulness [*query*, inspiration] of the sacred records. One such aid is sometimes sought in the supposed fulfilment of the ancient prophecies by the appearance which some of the sites of Syrian or Arabian cities present to the modern traveller." P. xvi.

Volney did not visit Palestine for the sake of finding confirmations of Scripture; nor was he a "partial advocate" of the literal fulfilment of prophecy. Neither was Burckhardt such, who never alludes to it, and was himself also a sceptic; nor Buckingham, who, in his "Travels in Palestine," has opposite allusions, and who, when an Arab sheikh told him at Gerash that the ruinous state of that city and of Ammon, &c., had been foretold, asked, "When? and where?" and was told, in answer, "By Solomon." Yet, besides other illustrations, he was the first to show the fulfilment of a prophecy peculiar to Ammon, by

recording that, while he rested during night close to its ruins, he could not sleep because of the bleating of the *flocks*. Seetzen, also, who was the first to explore some of the regions east of the Jordan and of the Dead Sea, never makes any allusion to the prophecies. These four travellers, more than all others, were the leading witnesses concerning Palestine adduced from the first in the following treatise, all the more because they never sought to find confirmations of scriptural prophecies, but involuntarily and unconsciously recorded the geographical facts by which, as of old, God *confirmed his word*. Daguerreotype plates supply unexaggerated confirmations.

Mr Stanley himself is a witness that there is no exaggeration in respect to the degree of the depopulation and desolation to which Palestine has been reduced, that comprehend and combine so many details. There are many testimonies in Moses and the prophets concerning the desolation of the land and of the cities. Mr Stanley truly states, in terms as strong as could be used, that "above all countries in the world, it is a *Land of Ruins*." On his own showing, therefore, the charge of exaggeration would be groundless and false in thus describing it. But to the precise degree of the desolation he is also a witness. There is one prophecy of Isaiah, concerning the blindness and unbelief of Israel as a people, which in express reference to them as applied to them literally, is more fully and frequently quoted in the New Testament than any other Scripture of the Old. In answer to the question, *How long?* was that blindness to continue, the Lord of hosts said to the prophet, "Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land. But yet in it shall be a *tenth*," &c. In many editions of this treatise it was stated that the precise degree of desolation had not been ascertained. But subsequently that lack of evidence was unconsciously¹ and officially supplied. Refer-

¹ In vindication of the sure word of prophecy against unsubstantiated aspersions by which the evidence which illustrates it has been recklessly assailed, I can here personally refer to a conversation which, after landing at Beyrout in 1844, I had at the British Consulate with Colonel (now Sir Hugh) Rose, then Consul-General of Syria, and Mr Moore, then Consul, and now Consul-General. On the latter congratulating me on my second visit to Syria, the former said, "We are seldom favoured in these troublous times with a second visit of any British traveller. May I ask if you have any special object in view in visiting Syria a second time." It immediately occurred to me that that was a good opportunity of ascertaining whether the testimony of Dr Bowring and Mr Moore had been given consciously or unconsciously of its application to predicted facts. My answer was that, on previously visiting Palestine, as one of the Deputation from the Church of Scotland to make inquiry in that and other lands concerning the Jews, our attention was so closely directed to that object that we did not turn aside to any other, so that I was within an hour of Ashkelon and of Tyre, without visiting either; that I then said, "I must return again," and had done so accordingly; and that my purpose then was, with full leisure, to

ring to the Report of Mr Moore, Consul-General of Syria, appended to Dr Bowring's Report on the Commercial Statistics of Syria, presented to both Houses of Parliament (*Lond.* 1840), from which that evidence was adduced, Mr Stanley superadds his personal testimony:—

“The countless ruins of Palestine show us not only that ‘Syria might support tenfold its present population, and bring forth tenfold its present produce,’ but that it actually did so” (p. 120).—*Yet in it shall be a tenth.*

Palestine would not now be the *Land of Ruins*, which it is, if it had not anciently been the land of towns and of cities. The multiplicity of its ruins, which in very numerous instances still bear the scriptural names of its cities of old, attest to this day the faithfulness of the record concerning them, when their separate inheritances were first apportioned among the tribes of Israel. Before as well as after the days of the prophets, Palestine was not a land of ruins but of cities. This fact all history attests; but it is only needful here to repeat the words of Gibbon, that, “from the age of David to that of Heraclius, Syria was overspread with *ancient* and flourishing cities, the inhabitants were numerous and wealthy,”¹ &c. Yet Mr Stanley would seem at least to lead his readers to infer that Palestine had always been a land of ruins.

“The ruins we now see are of the most diverse ages; Saracenic, Crusading, Roman, Grecian, Jewish, extending perhaps even to the old Canaanitish remains, before the arrival of Joshua. This variety, this accumulation of destruction, is the natural

traverse the land wherever it was open, in every direction, and to visit every predicted spot in Syria, mentioned in the prophets, and to daguerreotype them; that for this purpose one of my Sons was with me, and that we wished specially to be informed how we could, if possible, visit the deserted cities of the Haouran. They well knew of these cities, and spoke of them as “most remarkable,” being in many instances entire, and the houses perfect, though without any inhabitants. After some conversation on the general desolation of the land as well as of the cities, in regard to which we entirely agreed, I finally said, in the same plain and matter-of-fact style, that I was also desirous of ascertaining the precise degree of the depopulation and desolation of the land, as indicating the time of the return, and finally of the conversion of the Jews as a nation. They both seemed surprised, but said nothing. Seemingly astonished at their astonishment, I said to Colonel Rose, “Upon that subject I can appeal to your friend Mr Moore.” “To me!” exclaimed Mr Moore, holding up his hands in increased wonder; “I will be happy to give you every information in my power upon any subject; but really of that I know nothing.” His disclaimer was complete. “That,” I said, “is astonishing. You surely know of the Report on Syria laid before Parliament by order of Her Majesty. You know of the first of the official documents affixed to it. You may remember that you wrote it. But if you do not specially remember its contents, I have the Report with me, and can show it to you. The first word is *POPULATION*. The first paragraph is three lines and a half; and in that short paragraph you state that the inhabitants were reduced to a *tithe* of what the soil could abundantly maintain.” “I remember it perfectly,” he replied; “but what of that?” “That is one of the things which I wished to ascertain: the degree of desolation is the other. And in the body of the Report it is stated of northern Syria,—to which, with the exception of Lebanon, or the remnant of Syria, for which there is a word too (under ‘the burden of Damascus’),—that the country is capable of producing *tenfold* the present produce.” “Exactly so,” said Mr Moore; “it was the *closest* we could make it, but what of that?” I then said, of that I knew nothing; but if you wish to know what these things indicate, you may read Isaiah vi., in which the answer is given to the question, *How long?* Until the cities, &c.; but yet in it shall be a *tenth*, &c.

¹ Gib. vol. ix. p. 403.

result (!) of the position which has made Palestine for so many ages the thoroughfare and prize of the world. And although we now see this aspect brought out in a fuller light than ever before, yet, as far back as the history and language of Palestine reaches, it was familiar to the inhabitants of the country." P. 119.

As far back as the history of Palestine reaches, the very reverse was manifestly the fact. "Great and goodly cities" which existed before the arrival of Joshua, were given to the Israelites. Israel dwelt in the cities of the Amorites. Sixty walled cities besides un-walled towns in Bashan, were but a part of the inheritance of the half tribe of Manasseh. Upwards of an hundred and twenty cities are recorded by name as the inheritance of the tribe of Judah. Of the cities of the Canaanites that stood still in their strength, Joshua burned none, save Hazor only. The *cities* were of the most diverse ages, but not the *ruins*. Canaanitish, Jewish, Grecian, Roman, Crusading, Saracenic remains, show who were the builders, not who were the destroyers. Palestine was a land of cities before the days of David; and from his days to those of Heraclius, or for seventeen hundred years, "the ancient and flourishing cities" which overspread it, confute the assertion that the aspect of desolate cities was for ages familiar to the inhabitants of the country; and they prove that the contrast is so striking between that land of cities for so many ages, and the *long desolations* which have now succeeded, that none but the prophets of Omniscient Jehovah could have foretold it.

But Mr Stanley appeals to the language as well as to the history of Palestine in proof of his assumption. He says—

"In the rich local vocabulary of the Hebrew language, the words for sites of ruined cities occupy a remarkable place. Four separate designations are used for the several stages of decay and of destruction, which were to be seen even during the first vigour of the Israelite conquest and monarchy. (!) There was the rude 'cairn,' or pile of stones roughly rolled together (*Gal*). There was the mound or heap of ruin (*Tel*), which, like the Monte Testaccio at Rome, was composed of the rubbish and *débris* of a fallen city. There were the forsaken villages (*Azubah*), such as those in the Haurân, when 'the cities were wasted without inhabitant and the houses without man,' 'forsaken, and not a man to dwell therein.' (!) There are, lastly, true ruins, such as those to which we give the name—buildings standing, yet shattered, like those of Baalbec or Palmyra (*Ai*)."
P. 119.

Of the first of these designations, *Gal*, "rolling," it is said, in a reference at the foot of the same page, "Such were the cairns over Achan and the king of Ai." But these cairns were not "the sites of ruined cities;" nor does a "cairn" necessarily denote any such ruin. *Gal* does signify a heap of stones, such as is used for a memorial (Gen. xxxi. 46, &c.) But it has another signification besides that of a

"cairn," and, as Gesenius states, is "often used for ruins." None of these instances are quoted by Mr Stanley, nor would they have helped his argument. They occur, not in the historical but in prophetic books of Scripture. "Thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth. For thou hast made of a city an *heap*" (Isa. xxv.) "I will make Jerusalem *heaps*" (Jer. ix. 11). "Babylon shall become *heaps*" (Jer. li. 37).

Of the second designation, *Tel*, "heap," Mr Stanley says—

"Such were the cities so called in the neighbourhood of Babylon, (!) Tel-abib, Tel-harsa or harsa, Tel-melah, Tel-assar."

Babylonian cities were called by their own names.¹ But of all the ancient cities of Palestine, of which so many are named in Scripture, not one does he nor could he adduce, which has *Tel* prefixed to it; and he had to go to the neighbourhood of Babylon, to find any cities with such names, in order to show that in "the language of Palestine," the aspect of ruins from the earliest ages was familiar to its inhabitants! But though for ages unknown, as prefixed to the name of any city in Palestine, *Tel*, or "a ruinous heap," is now familiar to Arabs, Greeks, and Turks of the present day in that land of ruins.²

The third designation, *Azubah*, "forsaken," is a word of general signification, not applicable to ruins alone, nor "peculiar" in its significancy to the Hebrew language or any other, signifying, "there is none shut up or *left*"—"a woman *forsaken*,"³—"as one gathereth eggs that are *left*"—"Woe to the idle shepherd that *leaveth* the flock!" In the prophecies it is repeatedly applied to cities, "Yet gleanings shall be left in it. . . . *in that day* shall his strong cities be as a *forsaken* bough, and an uppermost branch which they *left* because of the children of Israel, and there shall be desolation." *Azubah* is a participle of the verb *azab*, which is of frequent occurrence, signifying, as it is translated, to forsake or to leave, whatever it be that is forsaken or left. But familiar as such a word is to the inhabitants of any country, it is *not* a designation applied to cities "during the first vigour of the Israelite conquest and monarchy;" nor is it true that the words occur as applicable to any facts recorded in scriptural history, as Mr Stanley applies them, when "the cities *were* wasted, without inhabitant, and the houses without man"—"forsaken, and not a man to dwell therein." His own references to Scripture here are necessarily to

¹ Gesenius says that *Tel* in names like Telassar, means "hill-fort;" and that, though the Hebrews apply it to a heap of ruins, yet the reason why the name occurs so commonly in Babylonian cities is because they were built upon mounds, owing to the flatness of the country.

² The city shall be builded upon her own *heap* (Jer. xxx. 18). Rabbah of the Ammonites shall be a desolate *heap* (Jer. xlix. 2).

³ He called thee as a woman *forsaken* (Isa. liv. 6). As one gathereth eggs that are *left* (Isa. x. 14). His strong cities are as a *forsaken* bough (Isa. xvii. 9).

prophecies alone; though in quoting, or rather misquoting these Scriptures, he changes the future into the past. Seven hundred years after "the Israelite conquest," Isaiah did "*well* prophecy" of the Jews, that they had shut their eyes lest they should see, since their eyes, according to the testimony of Christ and his apostle Paul, were shut more than seven centuries thereafter, as they still are even to this day, or three thousand years after the "Israelite conquest." But the words which the Lord spake unto Isaiah, in revealing *how long* their blindness was to continue, are the first which Mr Stanley here refers to (Isa. vi. 11, 12), as applied to that time; and which may thus manifestly confute his interpretation:—

"There *were* the forsaken villages, such as those of the Hauran, *when* 'the cities *were* wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man'" (Isa. vi. 12).

"Then said I, Lord, *how long*? And he answered, UNTIL the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land; but yet in it shall be a tenth" (Isa. vi. 11, 12).

It is here manifest that this prophecy has no allusion to cities without inhabitants at that time, or in any previous age; but exclusively and expressly to what they should become before the time when Israel, as a people, shall be *converted* and saved. Isaiah was not a false historian of what is "supposed" to have been the fact "as far back as the history and language of Palestine reaches," but a true prophet, as shown by the history and language of Palestine in the present day. Yet such is but a specimen of the latitude of "poetical interpretations of the prophecies."

"There are, lastly, true ruins," says Mr Stanley, "such as those to which we give the name—buildings standing, yet shattered, like those of Baalbec and Palmyra."

But these cities were not to be seen in ruins during the first vigour of the Israelite conquest and monarchy; but, rather, that monarchy had reached its height before they were built.

In a note on *Ai*, it is stated, "Three towns (!) at least were called from this circumstance—1. *Ai*—2. *Ije-abarim* or *Iim*—and 3. *Iim*, in the border of Judah." But "towns" were not ruins, by whatever name they were called. *Ai* bore that name before it was made a heap and a desolation by Joshua; and among the Jews who returned from the Babylonish captivity, and went every man to his own city, were the men of *Ai* (Ezra ii. 28). *Ije-abarim* is only mentioned as a station of the Israelites, before they reached the land of their inherit-

ance. *Iim*, as in the verse also referred to (Josh. xv. 29), is named among the twenty-nine cities, with their villages, which were "the uttermost cities of the tribe of the children of Judah toward the coast of Edom;" but it is not said that even its solitary aspect was that of ruins then, though they all have disappeared, or have only that aspect now.

It is added,—

"The Avites, or Avims, the earliest inhabitants of Philistia (Deut. ii. 23) seem (!) to have derived their name from this word—'The dwellers in ruins.' To what an antiquity does this [seem to] carry us back! Ruins before the days of those who preceded the Philistines!" P. 120.

All that is said of the Avims in that verse is, "And the Avims which dwelt in Hazerim, even unto Azzah, the Caphtorims destroyed them, and dwelt in their stead." Azzah, or Gaza, was a city, not a ruin; and *Avim* was the name of one of the cities of the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. xviii. 23), which, says Gesenius, had its name from the Avites.

Besides being the name of an ancient city, *ai* signifies "ruins, or ruinous heaps," and is so used by the prophets: "Jerusalem shall become heaps" (Jer. xxvi. 18; Micah iii. 12). "I will make Samaria as an heap of the field" (Micah i. 6).

The interpretation given to these Hebrew words does not show, without other proof, that the aspect of ruins was familiar of old to the inhabitants of Palestine: but the use of these, and of other similar words, in the language of the prophets, as applied to then existing cities,—shows that the word of the Lord, which he spake by the prophets, has turned cities into "cairns or piles of stones;" into mounds or ruinous heaps; or into shattered cities, which have yet to be repaired; or into forsaken cities, which have yet to be inhabited. There are cities without inhabitant, and houses without man, such as are to be found in no other land, except in Palestine alone.

Instead of the scriptural designation "cities without inhabitants," Mr Stanley designates them "forsaken villages, such as those in the Hauran." In the immediately preceding page (118), he says,—

"Here the ancient cities remain in like manner *deserted*, ruined, but standing; not mere masses and heaps of stone, but towns and houses, in amount and in a state of preservation which have no parallel except in the cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii, buried under the eruption of Vesuvius."

In a portion of Eastern Palestine, including the Hauran, of which he here speaks, there are more cities mentioned by name in a single chapter of Jeremiah than in all the other prophecies of the Old Testament together. In regard to them it may therefore be seen at

once whether the "poetical interpretations" of scriptural history, as well as of prophecies, which he supplies, be such as to nullify and supersede the literal fulfilment of prophecies concerning them.

If, indeed, Mr Stanley's theory be true in fact, that the Trans-jordanic tribes of Israel were nomades or "Bedouins"—who dwell in tents and not in houses, and who decamp from one place to another in their wanderings without any fixed residence—it would be something far worse than "involuntary exaggeration" in modern travellers to seek "the supposed fulfilment" of ancient prophecies concerning their dwellings, in the ruins of cities instead of the relics of tents, or in walls of stone instead of rags of haircloth, or in empty towns and towers instead of forsaken camps or broken poles. These, it may be supposed, would not have stood so long; nor, if they had, would they furnish a parallel to Pompeii or Herculaneum.

To estimate aright such a theory, which would sweep so many "cities" from the field of prophecy, we have only to look *really* to this large portion of "Palestine in Connection with its History," as that history, interwoven with prophecies concerning these tribes, is recorded in Scripture.

"Pastoral and *nomadic* character of the tribes east of the Jordan. . . . From first to last, they alone of the tribes never emerged from the state of their patriarchal ancestors,"¹ says Mr Stanley.

Of their patriarchal ancestors it is written, Abraham passed through the land—and the Canaanite was then in the land. He pitched his tent on the east of Beth-el. He went into Egypt to sojourn there.² He went up out of Egypt, even unto the place where *his tent* had been at the beginning. He removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre,³ in his tent.⁴ He dwelt in *the land of the Canaanites*.⁵ Isaac pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. He removed thence, and pitched his tent at Beersheba.⁶ Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents.⁷ God gave Abraham *none inheritance* in the land; no, not so much as to set his foot on. And God spake on this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years.⁸ Israel wandered in the wilderness forty years.

Such was the state of their patriarchal ancestors; and such the bondage in Egypt, and the wanderings in the wilderness, alike of all the tribes of Israel. But such was no longer the state of any one of the tribes, after they had entered on their promised *inheritance*.

¹ Stanley's *Sinal and Palestine*, p. 319.

² Gen. xii. 6-10.

³ Gen. xiii. 2, 18.

⁴ Gen. xviii. 2, 6, &c.

⁵ Gen. xxiv. 37.

⁶ Gen. xxvi. 17, 25.

⁷ Gen. xxv. 27; xxxi. 25; xxxiii. 18; xxxv. 21.

⁸ Acts vii. 5, 6. Gen. xv. 13.

“The Rephaims and the Amorites” were numbered among the nations whose land was to be given unto Abraham’s seed, according to the covenant which God made with him. The Amorites are numbered among the great and mighty nations, which the Israelites were to cast out, and utterly destroy. “And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have begun to give Sihon and his land before thee : begin to possess, that thou mayest inherit his land. Then Sihon came out against us—and we smote him, and his sons, and all his people. And we took *all his cities* at that time, and utterly destroyed the men, and the women, and the little ones, of every city, we left none to remain.—From Aroer even unto Gilead, there was not one city too strong for us ; the Lord our God delivered all unto us.”¹ “And Og the king of Bashan came out against us.—And we smote him until none was left to him remaining. And we took *all his cities* at that time, there was not a city which we took not from them, three score cities, &c.—And we took at that time out of the hand of the two kings of the *Amorites* the land that was *on this side Jordan*, from the river of Arnon unto Mount Hermon, —*All the cities* of the plain, and all Gilead, and all Bashan, unto Salchah and Edrei, *cities* of the kingdom of Og in Bashan.—And this land, which we possessed at that time, from Aroer, which is by the river Arnon, and half Mount Gilead, and the *cities* thereof, gave I (Moses) unto *the Reubenites, and to the Gadites*. And the rest of Gilead, and all Bashan, being the kingdom of Og, gave I unto *the half tribe of Manasseh* ; all the region of Argob, with all Bashan, which was called the land of giants (Heb. of *the Rephaims*).”² “And Israel dwelt in *all the cities of the Amorites*,”³ “and Moses gave unto them, even to *the children of Gad, and to the children of Reuben, and unto the half tribe of Manasseh* the son of Joseph, the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, the land, *and the cities thereof*, even *the cities* of the country round about.”⁴

Thus it is manifest that the tribes east of the Jordan did emerge from the state of their patriarchal ancestors, who dwelt in tents, and had no cities wherein to dwell. Their nomadic character was at an end, when they entered into the possession of their inheritance, and of the numerous cities and towns which were given them, and in which they dwelt ; and, instead of being wanderers beyond the bounds of their appointed possessions, it was a law in Israel that the inheritance was not to “remove from one tribe to another tribe ; but every

¹ Deut. ii. 31–36.² Deut. iii. 1–13.³ Num. xxi. 25.⁴ Num. xxxii. 33

one of the tribes of the children of Israel shall keep himself to his own inheritance."¹

"Pastoral and nomadic character of the tribes east of the Jordan. . . . Reuben is the most purely nomadic, and, therefore, the most transitory." "By the 'streams' of Reuben, that is by the fresh streams which descend from the eastern hills into the Jordan and the Dead Sea, on whose banks the *Bedouin chiefs then as now*, meet to debate," &c.²

But what saith the Scripture?

"And Moses gave unto the tribe of the children of Reuben inheritance according to their families. And their coast was from Aroer, that is on the bank of the river Arnon, and the city that is in the midst of the river, and all the plain by Medeba; Heshbon, and all her cities that are in the plain; Dibon, and Bamoth-baal, and Beth-baal-meon, and Jahaza, and Kedemoth, and Mephaath, and Kirjathaim, and Sibmah, and Zareth-shahar in the mount of the valley, and Beth-peor, and Ashdodh-pisgah, and Beth-jeshimoth, and *all the cities* of the plain, and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, which reigned in Heshbon."³ "And Israel took all these cities: and Israel *dwelt in all the cities* of the Amorites, in Heshbon, and in all the villages thereof."⁴ "And the children of Reuben built Heshbon, and Elealeh, and Kirjathaim, and Nebo, and Baal-meon (their names being changed), and Shibmah: and gave other names unto the cities which they builded."⁵

"'Unstable as water,' he (Reuben) vanishes away (!) into a mere Arabian tribe; 'his men are few,'" &c.—*Stanley*, p. 320.

"And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you *in the last days*.—Reuben, thou art my first-born, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power: unstable as water, thou shalt not excel" (Gen. xlix. 1–3). "As the Lord commanded Moses, so he numbered them in the wilderness of Sinai—every male from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war.—Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard, with the ensign of their father's house.—On the south side shall be the standard of the camp of Reuben according to their armies.—And his host was forty-six thousand and five hundred. And those which pitch by him—the tribe of Simeon—then the tribe of Gad.—All that were numbered in the camp of Reuben were an hundred thousand and fifty and one thousand

¹ Num. xxxvi. 7–9.

² Num. xxi. 25.

³ Stanley, pp. 319–320.

⁵ Num. xxxii. 37, 38.

³ Joshua xlii. 15–21.

and four hundred and fifty, throughout their armies. And they shall set forth in the second rank" (Num. i. 19-21; ii. 2, 10-16).—About four centuries and a half thereafter, there were "on the other side of Jordan, of the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and of the half tribe of Manasseh, with all instruments of war for the battle, an hundred and twenty thousand. All these men of war, that could *keep rank*, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel: and all the rest also were of one heart to make David king" (1 Chron. xii. 37, 38). Nearly nine hundred years after the Reubenites entered into possession of their inheritance, Ezekiel thus prophesied: "Thus saith the Lord God; This shall be the border, whereby ye shall inherit the land according to the twelve tribes of Israel.—And ye shall inherit it, *one as well as another*: concerning the which I lifted up my hand to give it unto you for an inheritance.—From the east side unto the west side, a portion for Reuben" (Ezek. xlvii. 13, 14; xlviii. 6).

Thus Reuben did not vanish away into a mere Arabian tribe.

"Unstable as water," he (Reuben) vanishes away into a mere Arabian tribe; "his men are few,"—it is all that he can do "to live and not die."¹

"And this is the *blessing*, wherewith Moses the man of God *blessed* the children of Israel before his death. . . . Let Reuben live, and not die: and let not his men be few (*literally, a number*), Deut. xxxiii. 1-6. [In Deut. xxxiii. 6, in the words *יְהִי מִתִּי מִסָּפָר*, the particle of negation must be repeated from what has preceded, and the rendering is "and let (not) his men be a number," *i. e.*, let them be many, innumerable. Gesenius, Ed. of S. P. Tregelles, under *מִסָּפָר*, number.] The blessing with which Moses blessed the children of Israel before his death, is concluded in these words, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places" (Deut. xxxiii. 29).

"Gad has a more distinctive character, something of the lion-like aspect of Judah. In the *forest-region south of the Jabbok*, 'he dwelt as a lion.' Out of his tribe came the eleven valiant chiefs who crossed the fords of the Jordan in flood-time to join the outlawed David. . . . These heroes were but the *Bedouins of their time*."²

"And of Gad he (Moses) said, Blessed be he that enlargeth Gad: he dwelleth as a lion, and teareth the arm with the crown of the head. And he provided the first part for himself, because there, in a portion of the lawgiver, was he seated, &c." (Deut. xxxiii. 20, 21.)

¹ Deut. xxxiii. 6. "The English version has added 'not' from the LXX."

² Stanley, p. 320.

In a portion of the lawgiver was he seated. He dwelleth as a lion said Moses, but neither Moses nor Joshua ever said that he dwelt in "the forest-region," but, as they testified, in the cities of Gilead.

"And the children of Gad built Dibon, and Ataroth, and Aroer, and Atroth, Shophan, and Jaazer, and Jogbehah, and Beth-nimrah, and Beth-haran, fenced cities : and folds for sheep."¹ "And Moses gave inheritance unto the tribe of Gad, even unto the children of Gad, according to their families. And their coast was Jazer, and *all the cities of Gilead*, and half the land of the children of Ammon, unto Aroer that is before Rabbah ; and from Heshbon unto Ramath-mizpeh, and Betonim ; and from Mahanaim unto the border of Debir ; and in the valley, Beth-aram, and Beth-nimrah, and Succoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon, Jordan and his border, even unto the edge of the sea of Chinnereth on the other side of Jordan eastward. This is the *inheritance* of the children of Gad after their families, the *cities*, and their villages."²

"Out of his (Gad's) tribe came the eleven valiant chiefs to join the outlawed David. These heroes were the Bedouins of their time."³

"These were of the sons of Gad, captains of the host : one of the least was over an hundred, and the greatest over a thousand. . . . Then the Spirit came upon Amasai, who was chief of the captains, and he said, Thine are we, David, and on thy side : peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thine helpers ; for thy God helpeth thee. Then David received them, and made them captains of the band. —And at that time day by day there came to David to help him, until it was a great host, like the host of God—to turn the kingdom of Saul to him, according to the word of Jehovah" (1 Chron. xii. 14. 18, 22, 23). These captains in the host of Israel were not the Bedouins of their time.

"These heroes were but the Bedouins of their time. The very name of Gad expresses the wild aspect which he presented to the wild tribes of the desert. Gad is a 'troop of plunderers ;' a troop of plunderers shall 'plunder' him, but he 'shall plunder' at the last."—*Stanley*, p. 320.

Is Mr Stanley quite sure about the wild aspect which the very name of Gad expresses ? or was such the aspect of the new born babe, to whom his mother Leah gave that name ? There is at least a question, whether the name *Gad* has any aspect of wildness. According to Gesenius, the name of Gad (גַּד) expresses *fortune* ; and, as he states, is thus well rendered in the Septuagint (Τύχη), and in the Vulgate, *fortuna*. Baal-gad, was so called from the worship of

¹ Num. xxxii. 20–26, 34–36.

² Josh. xiii. 24–28.

³ Stanley, p. 320.

Gad—i. e., FORTUNE.¹ A different Hebrew word (*gedud*²) signifies, as it is translated, *troop*, *band*, *army*, &c. “The army of Israel,” the “armies of Jehovah.”³ It occurs repeatedly in a single verse, “And the Lord sent against him (Jehoiakim) *bands* of the Chaldeans, and *bands* of the Syrians, and *bands* of the Moabites, and *bands* of the children of Ammon,” &c. None of these were Bedouins.

But that the value of this “poetical interpretation of prophecies,” may be duly appreciated, it has only to be set side by side with the prophecy itself, which it affects to quote; and with the prophetic blessing with which Moses blessed Gad, as well as all the other tribes of Israel.

And Jacob said—Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you what shall befall you in *the last days*.—Gad, a troop (*gedud*) shall overcome him; but he shall overcome at the last, Gen. xlix. 19. And of Gad he (Moses) said, Blesseth be he that enlargeth Gad; he dwelleth as a lion.—And he came with the heads of the people, he executeth the justice of Jehovah, and his judgments with Israel.

Gad is “*a troop of plunderers*,” a troop of *plunderers* shall “plunder” him, but he “shall plunder” at the last.

Such an interpretation goes even beyond the licence of poetry. Mr Stanley elsewhere states, that “if we have no warrant to take away, we have no warrant to add.” But it is here obvious that the words in italics are added, so that by a merely gratuitous assumption Gad is made a troop of *plunderers*. The “moral” of such an interpretation of prophecy, could only be claimed by freebooters, or by Bedouins whom Mr Stanley designates “the corsairs of the desert,” and to whom he likens the Gadites, the Reubenites, and the Transjordanic Manassites. It was not a troop of plunderers whom Moses blessed, and of whom, as he did of Dan, that man of God testified, “he executeth the justice of Jehovah, and his judgments with Israel.” But theory required that such words should be omitted, and others added, concerning Dan.

“What broke up the great tribe of Manasseh into two parts, and left one to follow the fortunes of its kindred house of Ephraim in the settled life of the western hills, and the other to wander over the pastures and forests of Gilead and Bashan, is not expressly said.”⁴

It is not expressly said, except by Mr Stanley, that the one half of

¹ Gesenius, pp. 157, 131.

² גִּדּוּד (1.) *Incision, cutting*. (2.) *A troop, band of soldiers*.—Gesenius.

³ גִּדּוּדֵי יְהוָה (*Gedudei Jehovah*), “the bands of Jehovah used of angels.”—Gesenius.

⁴ Stanley, p. 320.

the tribe of Manasseh led a settled life, and the other wandered over the pastures and forests of Gilead and Bashan. But it is said of the half tribe on the western side that "the children of Manasseh could not drive out the inhabitants of those cities (which were assigned to them); but the Canaanites would dwell in that land." No such divided inheritance was possessed by "the other;" but exclusive possession of many *cities of Gilead*, and *all the cities of Bashan* was given to them for an inheritance; and it is expressly shown that these cities were not tents of wandering Bedouins. So closely crowded were those cities of Manasseh, that the inhabitants of one city could scarcely "wander" even three or four miles without reaching another.

"The Lord our God delivered into our hands Og also, the king of Bashan.—And we took all his cities at that time, there was not a city which we took not from them, threescore cities, all the region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan. All these cities were fenced with high walls, gates, and bars; besides unwalled towns (cities) a great many. And we utterly destroyed them, &c. . . . And the rest of Gilead, and all Bashan, being the kingdom of Og, gave I unto the half tribe of Manasseh; all the region of Argob, with all Bashan, which was called the land of giants (Rephaim)."¹

No mention is made in Scripture of the "forests of Gilead;" but express testimony is given concerning the towns or cities of Gilead, as well as of the numerous cities and towns in Bashan.

"The sixty, or the thirty towns of Jair, the ancient chief of the tribe of Manasseh, were not called cities, but Bedouin 'villages of tents.'"²

"And Jair the son of Manasseh went and took the small towns thereof (Gilead), and called them Havoth-jair."³ "Jair, a Gileadite, judged Israel twenty and two years. And he had thirty sons, and they had thirty *cities* (עִירִים, *Irim*), which are called Havoth-jair unto this day, which are in the land of Gilead."⁴ "Jair had twenty-three *cities* (*Irim*) in the land of Gilead. And he took Geshur, and Aram, with the towns of Jair (Havoth-jair), from them, with Kenath, and the towns thereof, even threescore *cities* (עִיר, *Ir*)."⁵ The coast of the children of Manasseh was from Mahanaim, all Bashan, all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and all the towns of Jair, which are in Bashan, threescore *cities* (*Irim*). And half Gilead, and Ashtaroth, and Edrei, *cities* of the kingdom of Og in Bashan,⁶ &c. "*Threescore*

¹ Deut. iii. 3-6, 13.

⁴ Judges x. 3, 4.

² Stanley, p. 321.

⁵ 1 Chron. ii. 22, 23.

³ Num. xxxii. 41.

⁶ Joshua xiii. 30, 31.

cities (Irim), all these *cities (Irim)* were fenced with high walls, gates, and bars; beside unwall'd towns (*cities, Irim*) a great many."¹

In the fifth century after the half tribe of Manasseh had received their inheritance, Solomon was king over all Israel, and he had twelve officers over all Israel. One of these was "the son of Geber, in Ramoth-gilead; to him (pertained) the towns of Jair (Havoth-jair) the son of Manasseh, which are in Gilead; to him also pertained the region of Argob, which is in Bashan, threescore great *cities (Irim)*, with walls and brazen bars."²

Jair judged *Israel*, not Manasseh only, twenty-two years. He was not a Bedouin. His towns were not tents. He had twenty-three *cities* in the land of Gilead, and sixty walled cities in Bashan, which were called cities, and not "villages of tents." Such an expression is a contradiction in terms; villages are fixed, tents are movable. Bedouins camp and decamp; and they dwell not in houses or in villages, but in tents. But as the tribe of Gad was made a "troop of plunderers," the cities or the towns of Gilead, and the walled and unwall'd cities of the half tribe of Manasseh, must be transformed into "Bedouin villages of tents," that poetical interpretations may take the place of scriptural testimonies, and tribes of Israel, which dwelt for centuries in the cities of their inheritance, may be transformed into *wild* Ishmaelites, who wander in the desert, and whose hand is against every man, and every man's hand against them.

But the proof of so poetic a fancy is not yet complete; and the text may again be compared with the interpretation. Mr Stanley's next words are—

"Gilead," in the Song of Deborah, is said "to dwell beyond the Jordan *in tents*, Judges, v. 17."

"Gilead *abode* beyond Jordan: and why did Dan remain in ships? Asher continued on the sea-shore, and *abode* in his breaches, Judges v. 17."

Tents, formerly substituted for cities, have here to be *added*. They are not in the text, either in Hebrew or English. The same word *abode* occurs twice in the same verse, in the original as in the translation, and it no more implies tents in the one case than in the other, nor in many other passages, except where tents are expressly specified. Their addition here is another interpolation, which the necessities of the theory exact. But were tents named in the text, which they are not, even that would no more show that the children of Manasseh were Bedouins than that the children of Dan were sailors who re-

¹ Deut. iii. 4, 5.

² 1 Kings iv. 13.

mained in ships and had no dwellings on shore, while yet another tribe abode in his breaches.

Mr Stanley continues—

“Such as was the general character of the tribe, were also the individual heroes who, at rare intervals, acquired a national importance. How much more intelligible does Jephthah become, when we remember that he was raised up, not from the regular settlements of Judah and Ephraim, but from the half-civilized region of the eastern tribes; in the wildness of his freebooting life. . . . a Bedouin chief rather than an Israelitish judge.” P. 321.

Jephthah was an Israelitish judge, and not a Bedouin chief. He can here speak for himself, for his tribe, and for his cities; and he can show how much more intelligible and true a plain fact is than an opposite and fictitious theory.

When the children of Ammon made war against Israel, and demanded the restoration of the cities which Israel had taken, Jephthah sent to the king of Ammon a message worthy of a judge of Israel, Jud. xi. 14–27,—“Wilt not thou possess that which Chemosh thy god giveth thee to possess? So whomsoever Jehovah our God shall drive out before us, them will we possess—While Israel *DWELT in Heshbon and her towns, and in Aroer and her towns*, and in all the cities that be along the coasts of Arnon, *three hundred years*—why therefore did ye not recover them within that time? Wherefore I have not sinned against thee, but thou doest me wrong to war against me. Jehovah the Judge be judge this day between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon.” “The Lord delivered them into his hands. And he smote them from Aroer, even till thou come to Minnith, even twenty cities, and unto the place of the vineyards, with a very great slaughter. Thus the children of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel.”¹ “And Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then died Jephthah the Gileadite, and was buried in one of the cities of Gilead.”²

The testimony is decisive and complete, that from the days of Joshua to those of Jephthah, or for three hundred years, the Israelites beyond Jordan dwelt in their towns and in their cities; as they continued to dwell in them for upwards of three centuries thereafter, till they were led captive into Assyria.

Scripture says not a word about Jephthah's freebooting life; but it contains other testimonies concerning him. He was not raised up, it is said, from the regular settlements of Judah and Ephraim; but he

¹ Judges xi. 32, 33.

² Judges xii. 7.

was indeed raised up as the deliverer of Judah and Ephraim. When the children of Israel served the gods of Syria, and the anger of Jehovah was therefore hot against them, the children of Ammon vexed the children of Israel eighteen years, and moreover they passed over Jordan to fight against Judah and against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim; so that Israel was sore distressed. When distressed Israel became penitent, Jephthah the Gileadite, who was never a Bedouin nor a freebooter, was raised up to deliver Israel, and the eastern tribes triumphed over those who were also the oppressive enemies of the western. So great a deliverance deserved to have been "remembered," and was worthy of notice in a volume on "Palestine in Connection with its History."

Yet it is not enough that two tribes and a half of Israel, notwithstanding the many cities in which they dwelt for centuries, should all the while be transformed into Bedouins; that Jair's thirty cities in Gilead and sixty walled cities in Bashan should be reduced to tents; and that another judge in Israel should be made a freebooting Bedouin chief,—for it is further said :

"And, yet more, how lively an image do we form of the grandest and the most romantic character that Israel ever produced—Elijah the Tishbite—when we recollect that he, too, was born amongst the forests of Gilead (!), and found his first (!) refuge in the clefts of Cherith, &c. He is described as not a dweller in royal city or prophetic school, but one who in manner of life and outward aspect, and to a great extent by the place of his birth, was a genuine son of the desert."—Elijah the Gileadite," &c. P. 321.

The first mention of Elijah in Scripture is this—"Elijah *the Tishbite*, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab," &c. Tishbe, from which he derived the name of the Tishbite, before he dwelt by the brook Cherith, was not the name of a forest of Gilead, but of a town of Naphtali, and thus not on the eastern but on the western side of the Jordan. When the brook of Cherith dried up because there was no rain in the land, he went as he was commanded to Zarephath, a city of Zidon, and, not being a Bedouin, dwelt there, while he still bore the name of another city, as Elijah the Tishbite.¹

¹ The author of *Palestine in Connection with its History*, would have found, if he had sought, throughout that history as it is recorded in Scripture, continued testimonies to the *literal* fulfilment of prophecies in events which it records. Instead of fanciful "characteristics of the Bedouin life" in the history of Elijah the Tishbite, that history records both the prophecies and the facts—that there was not dew nor rain these years but according to the word of Elijah—that ravens fed him at the brook Cherith; that a widow in these days of famine sustained him at Zarephath, though she had but a handful of meal and a little oil in a cruse, with which she was about to bake her last meal with her son, that they might eat it, and die;—that when years had passed, and the time was come, there was abundance of rain, at the word of Elijah;—that all those things which that prophet did when he triumphed over the prophets of Baal, were done at the word of the Lord;—that Hazeel was king over Syria, and Jehu king over Israel, as Elijah had been commanded to anoint them as such, while yet Benhadad reigned over

The possession of the lands and of the cities, which were given from the first to the tribes of Israel for an inheritance, verified the promise of Jehovah and the prophecies of Moses and of Joshua. But the word of the same Jehovah declared the end from the beginning. While many express testimonies of Scripture confute the theory that the Transjordanic tribes were Bedouins, and that the many walled and unwalled towns in which they dwelt were tents, or villages of tents,—not only the sites of these Syrian cities, but these cities themselves, whether ruined or deserted, “present to the modern traveller” not merely the appearance but the reality of the fulfilment of prophecies, which are thus seen to be as literal as were those, with the record of the fulfilment of which Scriptural history abounds. In describing facts which show that Palestine is a Land of Ruins, the theorist himself thus confutes his theory—

“In Eastern Palestine, and still more if we include the Haurân and the Lebanon, the same picture is continued, although under a somewhat different aspect. Here the *ancient cities* [not villages of tents] remain, in like manner *deserted*, ruined, but standing; not mere masses and heaps of stone, but *towns and houses*, in amount and in a state of preservation which have no parallel except in the cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii, buried under the eruption of Vesuvius.”¹

Thus in this very region, besides ruins, there are *cities* without inhabitant, and *houses* without man; cities that are “deserted,” or *forsaken*, in which no man dwells; even many houses great and goodly without inhabitant. In stating *facts* that are the literal fulfilment of prophecies, Mr Stanley here again makes ample compensation for his “argument” against it,—were it not that some who love darkness rather than the light, and who are of little faith, may have that darkness deepened, and that faith diminished, by fanciful theories, and poetical interpretations.

“Facts,” it is said, “are stubborn, and geographical facts happily the most stubborn of all. We cannot wrest them to meet our views; but neither can we refuse the conclusions they force upon us.”² Burckhardt was thus constrained to admit—as quoted in every edition of this treatise—that “the ruins of Elealeh, Heshbon, Meon, Medaba, Dibon, Aroer, still subsist to illustrate the history of the Beni-Israel.” But

Syria, and Ahab over Israel;—that where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, dogs licked the blood of Ahab;—that his posterity also was cut off;—that dogs did eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel;—that, at the word of Elijah, fire came down from heaven and consumed one captain, with his fifty men, and then another, with his; and that Ahaziah, king of Samaria, died, according to the word of Jehovah, which Elijah had spoken. Besides these, other prophecies were fulfilled in the days of Elijah, of which also the literal accomplishment became the literal history of Palestine.

¹ Sinai and Palestine, p. 118.

² Ibid. p. xvii.

they do more than confute the theory that these cities or towns of Gilead were tents; named as they also are by name in the prophetic as well as the historical Scriptures, they illustrate by "the most stubborn of all facts," the literal truth of the prophecies concerning them.

But of the cities of Bashan more than ruins remain, to testify what they were, in accordance with scriptural history, and to show what they are, in confirmation of scriptural prophecies, alike literally true. There, as nowhere else throughout the wide world, "ancient cities" are truly to be seen, which were never laid in their graves like Nineveh and Babylon, and never were buried like Herculaneum and Pompeii. Salchah, Edrei, Bozrah, Bethgamel, Kerioth, retain their scriptural names, so as to be clearly identified. "Each succeeding traveller" since they were discovered by Burckhardt, has added new and corresponding testimonies concerning the "deserted cities" of the Haurân. Mr Stanley refers to Mr Porter's "forthcoming work on Damascus," in which it will be "for the first time fully described." In addition to other quotations from that work, in which such express and explicit testimony is borne to the literality of the prophecies concerning these cities, the following extract shows how they are witnesses to this day of the earliest conquests and settlement of Israel as a nation; while the spirit of prophecy now shows them to the world, as its "forsaken cities," without any parallel on earth, which are *left* for the "possession" of Israel on their final return.

"We are informed by the sacred historian, that in the land of Argob there were threescore great cities with gates and bars. These had apparently been constructed by the Rephaims, the aborigines of this country; (compare Gen. xiv. 5, with Deut. iii. 3-14, Josh. xiii. 12, and 1 Kings iv. 13); and the houses of Kureiyeh appear to be just such structures as this race of giants would rear up. The huge doors and gates of stone, some of which are nearly *eighteen inches* in thickness, and the ponderous bars, the places for which can still be seen, are in every way characteristic of a period when architecture was in its infancy, when manual labour was of little comparative value, and when strength and security were the great requisites. Time produces but little effect on such buildings as these. The heavy stone flags of the roofs, resting on the massive walls, render the whole structure as firm as if built of solid masonry; and the black basalt rock of which they are constructed is almost as hard as iron. May not the language of Ritter be strictly true, "that these buildings remain as eternal

witnesses of the conquest of Bashan by Jehovah?" (Ritter, Pal. und Syr. ii. 964.)¹

Mr Porter, Mr Graham, and other travellers who succeeded Burckhardt, are not justly chargeable with involuntary exaggeration or invention in finding confirmations of scriptural history and prophecy in the ruined or deserted cities of Eastern Palestine. "Inventions" properly belong to "poetical interpretations;" but the literal fulfilment of prophecy neither needs nor allows them. That the Transjordanic tribes of Israel were nomades (wanderers) or Bedouins, who dwelt not in houses but in tents; and that Jair and Jephthah, judges of Israel, were Bedouin sheikhs, are inventions which Scripture disproves. That their dwellings were "villages of tents,"—if such things there ever were anywhere,—that the forsaken cities of which the prophets spake are "forsaken villages," are inventions the falsity of which is demonstrated by scriptural history and by geographical facts. These facts confute alike the Bedouin theory as to Israelitish history, and poetical interpretations of prophecy; and show that the scriptural narrative of the earliest Israelitish conquests, and the prophecies concerning the cities of Ammon, Moab, Gilead, and Bashan, are all alike literally true.

Of Western Palestine it is truly said, "In Judea it is hardly an exaggeration to say, that whilst for miles and miles there is no appearance of present life or habitation, except the occasional goat-herd on the hill-side, or gathering of women at the wells, there is hardly a hill-top of the many within sight which is not covered by the vestige of some fortress or city of former ages. Sometimes they are fragments of ancient walls, sometimes mere foundations and piles of stones, but always enough to indicate signs of human habitation and civilization." Stanley, p. 118. There is no exaggeration in the prophetic language concerning *the decayed places* of Judah, which shall be raised up again; or *the old waste places* that shall be built again; or *the waste places, the foundations of many generations*, that wait for the appointed time to be *raised up*. "They shall build the old wastes; they shall raise up the former desolations, the desolations of many generations."

Hundreds of "ruined or deserted places" in Eastern Palestine, and hundreds also of ruinous sites of cities and of towns, or fortresses of Western Palestine, attest the literal truth of the prophecies concerning them. To adopt the words of the most recent witness, who resided a quarter of a century in Palestine, and who repeatedly traversed

¹ Porter's *Five Years in Damascus*, vol. ii. pp. 195, 196.

many parts of it, "broken columns, and prostrate temples, and cities in ruins must bear testimony to the inspiration of prophecy."¹

But while, it would seem, "it is no answer to say," that the Israelites in the wilderness were sustained by miracles, though Scripture leaves no question that they were; while an argument has been drawn from four Hebrew words to show that in ancient ages the aspect of ruins was familiar to the inhabitants of Palestine, though Scripture show that the aspect of cities, and not of ruins was for ages familiar to them; while texts have been quoted, or misquoted, to prove that the Transjordanic tribes were Bedouins, though the record is plain that the numerous cities in which they dwelt for centuries were cities and not "villages of tents," and that Jair and Jephthah, who were Judges of Israel, were Bedouin chiefs; the author of the romance of Elijah the Bedouin has other "poetical interpretations" to show that the prophecies concerning the cities of Palestine were not literal and prosaic, however closely his own testimony concerning that "Land of Ruins" corresponds with the very words of the prophets of Israel.

Of "the maritime plain" it is said, "As these plains form the point of junction and contrast with the hills of Judah on the west, so they form a point of junction and similarity with the wide pastures of the desert on the south. This free access from the wilderness to the unprotected frontier of Philistia is what in more recent times has always attached its fortunes more or less to those southern regions. Hence the insecurity of these parts at the present day from the unchecked incursions of the Bedouin tribes pouring in from beyond Gaza, reproducing a likeness of the desolations, which, probably (!) from the same cause befell this region at the close of the Jewish monarchy. "O Canaan, the land of the Philistines, I will even destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant. And the sea-coast shall be dwellings and 'cisterns' for shepherds, and folds for flocks, Zeph. ii. 5, 6." P. 255. It is said again, "The curse on Ascalon (Zeph. ii. 4, 7) must have expired before the time when it became the residence of the Herods and the court of the Crusaders." P. 268.

Scripture can here also show with what strange "inventions" a theorist may "involuntarily deceive himself and others." After the close of the Jewish monarchy, and after the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, Zechariah looked to far distant days, while he prophesied at the same time of Ashkelon and of the *king of Gaza*, and the pride of the Philistines. One prophecy thus closes, while another thus begins, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold *out of all languages of the nations*, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you. The burden of the word of the Lord in the land of

¹ The Land and the Book, by Dr Thomson, p. vii. New York, 1859.

Hadrach, and *Damascus* shall be the rest thereof : when the eyes of man, as of all the tribes of Israel, shall be toward the Lord. And Hamath also shall border thereby ; *Tyrus* and *Zidon*, though it be very wise. And Tyrus did build herself a strong hold.—She shall be devoured with fire. *Ashkelon* shall see it, and fear.—And *the king shall perish from Gaza*, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited. And I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.—But he that remaineth, even he, shall be for our God.—I will encamp about mine house because of the army—and no oppressor shall pass through them any more.—Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.—Thy King cometh unto thee.—His dominion shall be from sea to sea,” &c.¹ *Against Ashkelon* and the sea-shore, Jeremiah prophesied :—“ Ashkelon is cut off with the remnant of their valley : *how long* wilt thou cut thyself ? O thou sword of Jehovah, *how long* will it be ere thou be quiet ? put up thyself into thy scabbard, rest, and be still. How can it be quiet, seeing Jehovah hath given it a charge against Ashkelon, and against the sea-shore ? there hath he appointed it.”² In like manner, in the texts partly referred to, Zephaniah prophesied, “ Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth—it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord’s anger. For Gaza shall be forsaken, and Ashkelon a desolation.—The word of the Lord is against you ; O Canaan, the land of the Philistines, I will even destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant. And the sea-coast shall be dwellings and cottages for shepherds, and folds for flocks. And the coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah ; they shall feed thereupon : in the houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down in the evening : for the Lord their God shall visit them, and *turn away their captivity*.”³ In the last words of the same prophet the same expression occurs, after he testifies that the remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, and none shall make them afraid, “ Behold, *at that time* I will undo all that afflict thee : and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out ; and I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame. *At that time* will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you : for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when *I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith Jehovah*.”⁴

These testimonies show that it was not “ at the close of the Jewish monarchy ” that these desolations befell the land or the cities of the Philistines ; and, as a mere assumption and invention, “ probably,”

¹ Zech. viii. 23 ; ix. 1-10.

² Jer. xlvii. 5, 7.

³ Zeph. ii. 3-7.

⁴ Zeph. iii. 19, 20.

is put instead of proof, of which there is none. After that period Gaza had its king, Philistia its cities; and seventeen hundred years thereafter Ashkelon was the strongest fortress in Syria; nor, till still more modern times, is there any evidence to prove that it was a single day *without an inhabitant*. The sword was not quiet on the coast of Philistia, where the Lord had appointed it, when that coast "resounded with the world's debate;" nor is the sword yet sheathed in that land. No poetical interpreter can set in times past a limit to the question *how long?* Israel yet sees evil. The captivity of Judah is not yet turned back; nor the evening come, in which the remnant of the house of Judah shall lie down in the houses of Ashkelon; and the fact that it is *desolate without an inhabitant* is the proof that the curse on Ashkelon is not expired.

"Desolation of Phœnicia. There is one point of view," it is said, "in which this whole coast is specially remarkable. 'A mournful and solitary silence now prevails along the shore which once resounded with the world's debate.' This sentence, with which Gibbon solemnly closes his chapter on the Crusades, well sums up the general impression still left by the six days' ride from Beyrout to Ascalon; and it is no matter of surprise, that in this impression travellers have felt a response to the strains in which Isaiah and Ezekiel foretold the desolation of Tyre and Sidon." (!) P. 266.

There is but one day's ride from Tyre to Sidon. "The entire coast was once a continuous village, like the Bosphorus above Constantinople, and this renders the utter desertion of the coast the more remarkable. From Sidon to Tyre there is not a single hamlet on the shore."¹ The whole coast from Beyrout to Ascalon, and beyond it, is full of illustrations of the sure word of prophecy, in the desolation of Phœnicia, of the sea-coast of Palestine; in the *gleanings* that are left, and in the cottages for shepherds and folds for flocks of the sea-coast of Philistia, where alone such cottages are to be seen, along the entire coast of Syria. It is an "invention" to make travellers responsible for a theory, which would obliterate these prophecies, and make Tyre and Sidon sponsors for them all.

These towns can answer for themselves—that judgment has fallen on them. "Perhaps no greater stretch of imagination in ancient history is required, than to conceive how the two small towns of Tyre and Sidon, as they now exist, could have been the parent cities of Carthage and of Cadiz, the traders with Spain and Britain, the wonders of the East for luxury and magnificence." No one assuredly can affirm that Tyre and Sidon are what they were: but the burden

¹ The Land and the Book

of the Lord has so fallen upon these great cities of old, that they are now two small towns. "The Phœnician power which the prophets denounced has entirely perished" (P. 266). This is true; for it is written the Lord *will smite her* (Tyre) *power in the sea* (Zech. ix. 4). But other things are written besides the denunciation of the Phœnician power; and the prophecies of Isaiah and Ezekiel are not restricted to that denunciation alone.

Referring to Isa. xxiii. 1-15, and to three chapters of Ezekiel, xxvi.-xxviii., it is said—

"So total a destruction, for all political purposes, of the two great commercial cities of the ancient world has been frequently held up to commercial states in the modern world, as showing the precarious tenure by which purely mercantile greatness is held; and in this respect the prophecies of the Hebrew seers were a real revelation of the coming fortunes of the world, the more remarkable because experience has not justified such a result." P. 266.

"The more remarkable!" but not the more convincing. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead," are words which came from the mouth of Jesus, the true and faithful witness. But surely one who rose from the dead would have something more persuasive to tell than such poetical interpretations. One chapter of Isaiah concerning Tyre, and four of Ezekiel, are not thus to be explained away: but experience has shown the truth of many prophecies contained in these chapters, so as to prove that these prophets spake by inspiration of God.

"But to narrow the scope of these sublime visions to the actual buildings and sites of the cities is," adds Mr Stanley, "as unwarranted by facts as it is mistaken in idea."

"Actual buildings" of these cities, as they existed in the days of the prophets, there are none; and the ruins of Tyre lie not where that city stood. But, to whatever else the prophecies concerning it also apply, the fact bears witness that Ezekiel was not "mistaken in idea," when his word went forth against the actual buildings, as they existed then, or the *walls* and *houses*, the *stones* and the *timber* of the great city Tyrus; and what it was made, and where it now lies, is seen to this day. "They shall destroy the *walls* of Tyrus, and break down her towers, and make her like the top of a rock. Thus saith the Lord God: Behold I will bring upon Tyrus Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon—with his axes he shall break down thy *towers*. . . . They shall break down thy *walls*, and destroy thy pleasant *houses*: and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the waters" (xxvi. 4-12).

How cursorily the history of Palestine, when illustrative of literal prophecies can be passed over, the following sentence demonstrates:—"Tyre may perhaps have been in a state of ruin shortly after the Chaldean, and, subsequently, after the Greek conquest of Syria." P. 267.

"Prosaic," but sure-footed History, following in the foot-prints of clear-sighted Prophecy, cannot keep pace, in passing over scenes like these, with such blind, and deaf, and skipping Poetry. Nebuchadnezzar and Alexander the Great made their names and their doings for ever memorable to the world; and "may perhaps" does not adequately describe the predicted and prescribed work which either the former wrought on Tyre in his Chaldean, or, subsequently, the latter in his Greek conquest of Syria. To see the king of Babylon, who is called by name for the work he had there to do, the sovereign of the first of the four monarchies which were truly "empires," brought with *horses, chariots, horsemen, companies, and much people*, making a fort against Tyre, and casting a mound against it; setting engines of war against its walls, and breaking down its towers, his chariots and horsemen entering its gates, as men enter into a city wherein is made a breach, treading down its streets with the hoofs of his horses, slaying its people with the sword, and bringing its strong garrison down to the ground; to see that proud and mighty king causing his army to serve a great service against Tyrus,—in a siege, as history records, of thirteen years' duration,—till every head was made bald, and every shoulder was peeled, and to know that he had Egypt for his hire; To see his work subsequently perfected, and the word of God against Tyrus fulfilled, by the *first great king of Grecia*, in the midst of his conquests,—in his predicted overthrow of the *Persian* empire, while raising the *Grecian* on its ruins—arrested at Tyre, and serving too with his army there, month after month; taking the ruins of Old Tyre from off its site, casting the stones and the timber which it plentifully supplied, and scraping its dust from off it, and casting them in the *midst of the water*; and doing thus what never before had and never since has been done to any city; To see these things as literally done as they were literally written, is to feel that the vision is sublime, to see that the literal sense of Scripture is truly the transcendental, that the prosaic fulfilment of prophecy surpasses poetical fictions, that the King of kings will execute his word to whatever servile drudgery the mightiest of monarchs, together with their armies, are subjected in the execution of it, and that verily there is a God who judgeth in the earth; and, as all poetical interpretations can never show, that his prophets did indeed speak as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Of the same Tyre which existed in the days of Ezekiel, which, according to his word, Nebuchadnezzar besieged, and of which the walls were broken down, the houses destroyed, and its stones, its timber, and its dust laid in the midst of the water, that prophet further testifies, "I will make *thee* like the top of a rock ; *thou* shalt be (a place) to spread nets upon ; *THOU shalt be built no more* : for I, Jehovah, have spoken it, saith the Lord God." According to the word of Jehovah, it still lies, where it was laid, in the midst of the water. There the Tyre of Hiram, the parent city of Carthage, has lain for twenty-two centuries. In one page Mr Stanley says that "even whilst the 'world's debate' of the middle ages gave a new animation to these shores, the brilliant Tyre of Alexander and Barbarossa had no real connection with the Tyre of Hiram." In the next page, after stating that "Tyre may perhaps have been in a state of ruin shortly after the Chaldean, and subsequently, after the Greek conquest of Syria," he adds, "but *it* was always speedily rebuilt," &c. The Tyre of Hiram was never rebuilt. The Tyre of the present day, has "no real connection with the Tyre of Hiram." But the prophecies have still a connection with the Tyre of Hiram ; and the long mole or causeway which Alexander the Great formed in the midst of the water through the sea to the island, and also the "magnificent columns which strew the shores," and are seen beneath the waters around that ancient isle, confirm to this day the sure word that *it* has never been rebuilt. There is not the vestige of a city now, nor are its masses of ruins left where its towers, and walls, and houses were destroyed, over the wide space where that city stood on the Phœnician shore, into the gates of which, and not of insular Tyre, the *horsemen* and *chariots* of Nebuchadnezzar entered, and all the streets of which were trodden down by the hoofs of his horses. Of that great city it is written, "Though *thou* be sought for, yet shalt *thou* never be found again, saith the Lord God." Thus spake Jehovah ; and thus wrote Ezekiel ; but not thus writes Mr Stanley.

Tyre seems to be his stronghold, not for, but against the literal truth of the sure word of prophecy. Maintaining, in one page, that there is no real connection between the more modern Tyre and the Tyre of Hiram, he identifies them in the next, and asserts concerning the Tyre which was laid in ruins in the Chaldean conquest of Syria, and subsequently cast in the midst of the sea, that *it* was speedily rebuilt ; and then, on their supposed identity, he founds an "argument" against the literal fulfilment of prophecy because of *its* assumed revival. But the geographical fact, that there is no longer an island

there, and that the mole which, as historically recorded, Alexander the Great constructed out of the ruins of Old Tyre, connecting that ancient island with the ancient shore, is an existing proof of an enterprise as wonderful as any which history records, which was executed by the great captain of his age in confirmation of a prophecy as literal as any words could be. Can any fisherman, or philosopher, or poetical interpreter, or rationalist, answer the question, *What city is like Tyrus, like the destroyed in the midst of the sea?*

Can words be more literal than those which Ezekiel applies to the same city which Nebuchadnezzar besieged, and with the hoofs of his horses trode down all its streets: "They shall break down *thy* walls, and destroy *thy* pleasant houses; and they shall lay *thy* stones and *thy* timber and *thy* dust in the midst of the water. And I will cause the noise of *thy* songs to cease; and the sound of *thy* harps shall be no more heard. And I will make *thee* like the top of a rock: *thou shalt be* (a place) to spread nets upon, *thou shalt be built no more*: for I Jehovah have spoken (it), saith the Lord God." All these things are true of that city, even as Jehovah hath spoken.

But though the great city Tyre, which Nebuchadnezzar besieged, and of which Ezekiel prophesied, be no more, Tyre is named in the New Testament as existing then. There was the Tyre of the middle ages; there is the Tyre of the present day; and Tyrus is mentioned in the prophecies of Zechariah, together with *Damascus, Hamath, and Sidon*, as still existing, "when the eyes of man, as of all the tribes of Israel, shall be towards Jehovah." But these facts affect not the truth that the stones, the timber, and the dust of the great city Tyrus, which existed in the days of Isaiah and Ezekiel, were laid in the midst of the water; and that *it* is for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea, as a daguerreotype taken from the mole which Alexander the Great constructed from its ruins, can show. Over that mole, bare as the top of a rock, as if it formed the top of a ridge of rocks through the sea, every traveller there now passes to modern Tyre.

Of that day, of which Zechariah also prophesied, in which Jehovah shall be king over all the earth, and there shall be no more destruction, but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited, shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO JEHOVAH OF HOSTS (the Lord Sabaoth). In similar terms the last words of Isaiah concerning Tyre are, "Her merchandise and her hire *shall be holiness to Jehovah*: it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before Jehovah, to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing."

It was continental Tyre which Nebuchadnezzar besieged, and into

the gates of which he entered with his horses and chariots, which did not pass through the sea to the isle of Tyre. But Isaiah, not Ezekiel, speaks of the inhabitants of the isle. In "the burden of Tyre" (Isa. xxiii.), it is written, "Be still, ye inhabitants of the *isle*.—Pass over to Tarshish; howl, ye inhabitants of the *isle*.—He stretched out his hand over the *sea*.—The Lord hath given a commandment against the merchant-city, to destroy *the strongholds* thereof.—And it shall come to pass in that day, that Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king: after the end of seventy years shall Tyre sing as an harlot. Take an harp, go about the city, thou harlot that hast been forgotten; make sweet melody, sing many songs, that thou mayest be remembered," &c. But after that it is finally written, "Her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord."

Thus, in addressing the inhabitants of the *isle*, a predicted revival of Tyre was recorded; and Tyre was to make itself remembered after its strongholds were destroyed, and after it had been forgotten; and an argument against the literal fulfilment of prophecy is not to be truly drawn from this predicted fact, that Tyre on the isle,—as on the land,—was ruined and forgotten; but it did thereafter sing as an harlot, and make itself to be remembered. How long is not said; though another testimony is finally given of her merchandise and her hire, such as Scripture does not else apply to any city, as such, in ages that are past. Other proofs from earlier days, did space permit, might be adduced to show that Tyre, after it had been forgotten, did sing as an *harlot*, besides those which the ample pages of the Archbishop of Tyre plentifully supply, to show, according to the scriptural definition of the term, how Tyre, then limited to the ancient island, did thus sing, while long a city of the Crusaders, who gloried in the faith of that seven-hilled city, which had on her forehead a name written, "The mother of *harlots*," &c. More cannot be said of this "brilliant Tyre of Alexander and Barbarossa" than what is written of Tyre, "Go about the city, thou harlot that hast been forgotten; make sweet melody, sing many songs, that thou mayest be remembered. She shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world that are on the face of the earth."

The ancient city of Tyre, according to Pliny, was nineteen Roman miles in circumference; the ancient island, on part of which the present Tyre stands, is less than half of one square mile. Of the modern Tyre—as if it were the sole scene of the prophecies concerning Tyre—it is said: Tyre,

“ Though confined within a very small part of the ancient city, is still a thriving and well inhabited village, with a considerable traffic in millstones, conveyed from Hermon in long caravans, and thence exported to Alexandria. The period during which it sunk to the lowest ebb [not quite so low as when it, too, was cast into the midst of the water] was during the last years of the past and the first years of the present century; and the comparative desolation which it then exhibited no doubt presented some of the imagery (!) on which so much stress has been laid in order to convey the impression of *its* (!) being a desolate rock, only (!) used for the drying of fishermen’s nets. But if this was not the case before that period, and is certainly not the case now, it is idle to seek for the fulfilment of the ancient prediction within these limits (!) and the ruin of the empire (!) of Tyre, combined with the revival and continuance (!) of the town of Tyre, is thus a striking instance of the moral and poetical, as distinct from the literal and prosaic, accomplishment of the prophetic Scriptures.” P. 267.

No prophet spake of, or against, the supposed “ empire of Tyre,” in the common acceptation of the word, but against the city Tyre, to *smite* whose *power in the sea* one word of theirs sufficed. That city was to be, and that city long has been, a place where fishermen spread their nets. But fishermen are not Bedouins. They have houses or huts to dwell in; and fish are caught in order to be eaten. Dwellings and inhabitants there are, where fishermen dry their nets near to their own doors; but none such there would be there, if the modern Tyre were a desolate rock, instead of a village in which fishermen dwell. Between the village and the ancient Phœnician coast there is now a place as *bare* as any beach on England’s coast, long enough and wide enough, in the midst of the sea, for all the fishermen of Kent to spread their nets over the sea-buried ruins of ancient Tyre. But no prophet ever said that Tyre would be “ only ” for the spreading of nets; and they testified other things of insular Tyre.

But the millstones! Even “ a considerable traffic of millstones ! ” They might possibly have some weight in an argument against the poetical interpretation in the immediately preceding page (266), that, in respect to so *total* a destruction, for all political purposes, of the two great *commercial* states of the ancient world, “ the prophecies of the Hebrew seers were a real revelation of the coming fortunes of the world ; ” for, is there not some commerce in a “ considerable traffic ” of them? And is it not possible that such “ imagery ” may have some “ political purpose ” to subserve? But the traffic and the merchandise of modern Tyre must be somewhat larger and better than it is before the last words of a Hebrew seer be fulfilled concerning Tyre, “ Her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness unto the Lord.”

Since the days of Volney, Tyre was nearly destroyed by an earthquake. Infidel as he was, yet in contrasting the ancient commerce

of Tyre with its trade in his day, "a few sacks of corn and raw cotton, and a trifling fishery," could not restrain him from acknowledging the accomplishment of the prediction. And there are still later witnesses than Mr Stanley who can solve the mystery of the millstones—even of a considerable traffic of millstones—in long caravans.

"The modern town, or rather village, contains from 3000 to 4000 inhabitants, about one half Melâwileh, and the other Christians. Most of the houses are mere hovels; the streets are unusually narrow, crooked, and filthy, and the walls and a few houses of a superior class are so shattered by repeated shocks of earthquakes, that they look as if about to fall to pieces. The palm, and pride of India trees, scattered among the houses and gardens, relieve in some degree the aspect of desolation, and contribute to hide Tyre's fallen glory. The ancient 'mistress of the seas' can at the present day only boast of the possession of a few crazy fishing-boats; and her whole trade consists in the *yearly* export of a few bales of cotton and tobacco, and a few boat-loads of millstones and charcoal. There is but one gate; and the numerous breaches in the old wall render others unnecessary. One is reminded at every footstep and at every glance of the prophecies uttered against this city, 'They shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise; and they shall break down thy walls, and destroy thy pleasant houses,' &c. Ruins on the top of ruins cover the whole peninsula, and are strewn among the waves around it."

"There is nothing here of that which led Joshua to call it the strong city. Nothing of that mighty metropolis which baffled the proud Nebuchadnezzar and all his power for thirteen years, until every head was bald, and every shoulder peeled in the hard service against Tyre. Nothing in this wretched roadstead and empty harbour to remind one of the times when merry mariners did sing in her markets. No visible trace of those towering ramparts which so long resisted the utmost efforts of the great Alexander. All have vanished utterly like a troubled dream. . . . There yet remains one solitary specimen of Tyre's great sea-wall—a stone, nearly 17 feet long and 6½ thick, rests just where Tyrian architects placed it thousands of years ago. . . . The number of granite columns that lie *in the sea* is surprising—they are thickly spread over *the bottom of the sea on every side*. I have often rowed leisurely round the island to look at them when the surface was perfectly calm, and always with astonishment. Tyre must have been a city of columns and temples *par excellence*. The whole north end appears to have been one vast colonnade."

. . . . "With but few exceptions it is now a cluster of miserable huts, inhabited by about 3500 impoverished Metawelies and Arab Christians, destitute alike of education, of arts, and of enterprise, carrying on with Egypt a small trade in tobacco from the neighbouring hills, and of lava millstones from the Hauran."

"Where do you find the site of continental Tyre? It extended, I suppose, from the great fountains of Ras el Ain northward, included the long, low Tell Habeish as its acropolis, and in its greatest prosperity probably reached the shore opposite the island. The whole of the *Tell* is full of buried foundations. . . . Last summer the Pasha's agent had workmen erecting houses on Tell Habeish, and I was greatly interested to see that, wherever the men dug for foundations, they came upon old works, which must have belonged to what Diodorus called Palai Tyrus in his day. Pliny says that it was thirty furlongs from insular Tyre to the south, which agrees with this locality, and with no other. . . . It is of this city that Ezekiel says, 'Thou shalt be a terror, and never shall be any more.' And, so far as one can judge, it will never be a city again. Alexander, as Arrian relates, scraped off the very dust

¹ Murray's Handbook of Syria, pp. 391, 392.

of old Tyre to build his causeway, and you now find none of the remains except by digging below the surface.—Even this feeble attempt of Reschid Pasha to revive the site of old Tyre has proved a losing speculation. It is so sickly, that not even a village of any size can be established there; and, should the plain become again densely peopled, the villages will be built at a distance from this fatal spot.”¹

It is not “*within* these limits” of the modern village of Tyre that “the fulfilment of the ancient prediction” is sought, as if fishermen spread their nets over houses or over huts. But Mr Stanley’s “argument” is founded on the supposed revival of the ancient Tyre, which Nebuchadnezzar besieged, the stones of which were cast into the midst of the water, and which has never been revived or rebuilt. Unlike to the sites of other cities, the ruinless site of that ruined city is “so sickly, that not even a village of any size can be established there,” and its ruins lie, where its stones were cast, in the midst of the sea.

“The same argument,” Mr Stanley continues, “applies with greater or less (?) force to the prophecies against Asecalon, Damascus, and Petra, as well as to those of which the fulfilment is supposed to be future.” (!)

Thus, it would seem, there is an end of the literal fulfilment of prophecy, in times past, and present, and future. Nevertheless, “the same argument” notwithstanding, *the Scriptures cannot be broken*, the testimonies of the Lord are *very sure*, and of the times of the restitution of all things, God hath spoken by the mouth of all his prophets since the world began. The argument itself may be adduced to show, amidst manifold other proofs, that there is at least one prophecy which is more than *supposed* to be future. “And in that day the deaf *shall hear the words of the book*, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness” (Isa. xxix. 18).

It is written for a time yet to come, “Jehovah hath made bare his holy arm in the sight of all nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God” (Isa. lii. 10). “The burden of the word of the Lord in the land of Hadrach,” thus begins, “And *Damascus shall be the rest thereof: when the eyes of man, as of all the tribes of Israel, shall be towards Jehovah*. Hamath also shall border thereby; Tyrus, and Zidon,”² &c. The existence of Damascus, and of these towns, however fallen from what they were, is an argument not against but for the literal fulfilment of prophecy, while so many cities besides have been *long desolations*, without an inhabitant. Till it was divided of late years, the pashalic of Damascus, over which the

¹ The Land and the Book, vol. i. pp. 270, 271.

² Zech. ix. 1, 2.

pasha of that city had despotic authority, was more extensive than the kingdom of Damascus of old, hemmed in as it was by the kingdom of Israel on the one side, and of Hamath on the other. The land of Israel has only gleanings left of all its glory: but there is still *a remnant of Syria*. Under the burden of Damascus—and that, too, for a time not past—it is written, “The kingdom (shall cease) from Damascus, and the remnant of Syria: they shall be as the glory of the children of Israel, saith Jehovah of hosts. And *in that day* it shall come to pass, that the glory of Jacob shall be made thin—yet gleaning grapes shall be left in it.—*At that day* shall a man look to his Maker, and his eyes shall have respect to the Holy One of Israel,” &c. (Isa. xvii. 3, 4–7.)

Of Petra it is argued—

“*If* (!) Petra under the Roman empire rose into a great thoroughfare of Eastern traffic, and is now again, after a long interval of desertion, the yearly resort of European travellers, it is clear that the words ‘None shall pass through it (!) for ever and ever,’ cannot be extended beyond the fall of the race of Esau.” P. 268.

The “revival” of Petra under the Roman empire is here “supposed.” Petra was the capital of a kingdom in which Aretas reigned, before it was subject to the Roman empire. Not a tittle of evidence is adduced to show that Petra was without an inhabitant, or that none passed through *Idumea*, or that this prophecy was fulfilled, prior to that period. “The caravans, *in all ages*,” says Dr Vincent, “appear to have pointed to Petra as a common centre,” &c. (See below on *Idumea*.)

It is, besides, not of Petra, but of *Idumea*, that the prophet speaks; and the yearly resort of European travellers to Petra and to Mount Hor, which “overhangs” it, no more shows that they pass through *Idumea* than the Israelites did, who went to Mount Hor, and again journeyed from it; and “even to ascend to the summit” of that mountain is only to reach the place where Aaron was buried. “The mountain which overhangs the valley of Petra,” says Mr Stanley, “has been known as far back as the knowledge of travellers extends, as ‘the mountain of Aaron.’ The basin of Petra is known to the Arabs by no other name than ‘the valley of Moses.’” P. 95. “The children of Israel, even the whole congregation, journeyed from Kadesh, and came unto Mount Hor” (Num. xx. 22). “And they journeyed from Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea, to compass the land of Edom” (Num. xxi. 4). But they did not pass through Edom.

In Volney’s days, he could only speak as he heard of the deserted cities of *Idumea*, and record that it had not been visited by any tra-

veller. There was, in truth, "a long interval of desertion" posterior to the fall of the Roman empire, till "the long lost Petra" was discovered. That the capital of Idumea should long have been deserted, and Idumea untraversed by any European traveller—that the first travellers who visited Petra should have encountered difficulties, not even yet altogether unknown, ere that ancient thoroughfare is reached—that many who have reached that tenantless city on the border of Edom have not penetrated farther through it,¹—betoken a condition of that long frequented land which none but the prophets of Jehovah could have foreseen, though the time be not come when, as stated in previous editions, the prophecy concerning none passing through Idumea for ever and for ever, is marked as destined to receive its full completion.

In quoting this text, Mr Stanley's references are to Isa. xxxiv. 14; Jer. xlix. 18; of which he gives his "poetical interpretation." In the latter of these passages it is written, "No man shall abide there (in the clefts of Selah, or Petra), neither shall a son of man dwell in it." But in the next verse it is asked, "Who is like me? or *who shall appoint me the time?*" &c. Does Mr Stanley say that it is he, when he so confidently asserts that "*it is clear* that the words 'None shall pass through it for ever and for ever,' cannot be extended beyond the fall of the race of Esau?" or is it *clear* that the race of Esau did not fall till *for ever and for ever* had an end? "The day of the Lord," saith the prophet Obadiah, "shall be upon all the heathen.—But upon Mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions,—and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the Lord hath spoken it.—And saviours shall come up on Mount Zion, to judge the house of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the LORD'S." There is "for ever and for ever" *after* that; of which ages of ages Isaiah spake, when he testified of "the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion,—and from generation to generation it (Idumea) shall lie waste; none shall pass through it *for ever and for ever*." (See chap. on Idumea.)

In making known to Daniel the things that should befall *his people* in the last days, the angel at length commanded him to "*shut*

¹ "It (Petra) is literally 'paved with the good intentions' of travellers unfulfilled. There, was Mount Hor, which Robinson and Laborde wished to ascend; there, the plain half-way, where Burckhardt was obliged to halt without reaching the top; here, the temple which Irby and Mangles saw only through their telescopes; here, the platform from which the Martineau party were unable to stir without an armed guard; and, lastly, on the very verge of our encampment, at the entrance of the pass, travellers with our own dragoman were driven back last year without even glimpse of the famous city."—*Stanley*, p. 86.

up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end : many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased (xii. 4). Multiplied as these signs of that time are now, incomparably more than in any previous age, the frequent visits of European travellers to Eastern lands before unvisited or little known, have subserved the accumulation of "a mass" of evidence, in literal verification of many prophecies, which no argument can overthrow. And when Petra is "now again, after a long interval of desertion, the yearly resort of European travellers," the literal truth of the prophecies concerning it, is illustrated by the testimonies of conscious or unconscious, of willing or unwilling witnesses : and, in more than poetical interpretation, it may in so far be said of it, because of this "yearly resort," more than it could have been for centuries past, in reference to Petra, "How are the things of Esau searched out ! how are his hidden things sought up !" (Obad. 3, 6.)

Mr Stanley has the happy, or unhappy, art of sometimes closing his sentences with an obvious truth, as if he could thereby clench his argument in proof of a fiction. Not distinguishing between things that differ, he confounds prophecies against heathen cities, as they existed in the days of the prophets, with "warnings," as if any man had ever fancied that warnings were "aimed against stocks and stones," or addressed to such insensate objects : and, as if he thereby proved that there are no prophecies in Scripture which refer to the future prosperity of Jerusalem, he asserts, what no man can deny, that no expectation of its future prosperity can be founded on prophecies uttered—"in reference to its restoration by Ezra !" P. 267.

But there are many prophecies against cities, the accomplishments of which are not only credentials of inspiration, but also warnings now to living souls, which no prophet ever uttered to those who dwelt within these cities then.

The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah was not foretold as a warning to "the living souls" within them : but the Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do."—Jonah preached to the men of Nineveh ; they repented at his warning, and Nineveh was spared. But when they sinned anew, no second Jonah was sent there to warn them, though prophets of Israel denounced its doom. "Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth," said Jehovah to his prophet Jeremiah. "See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant (Jer. i. 9, 10). In the book of

his prophecies he records the word of the Lord against Babylon and its cities ; against Philistia, and its cities ; against Moab, and its cities ; against Edom, and its cities : but it is never recorded that he, or any other, went unto these cities to utter his words as warnings to those who dwelt therein. So also with other prophets. The word of the Lord by Ezekiel went forth against Tyre and other cities ; but it is never said that that captive Israelite in the land of the Chaldeans was sent to Tyre, to utter his prophecies against it as warnings to the living souls within it, or to the cities of Egypt, Edom, Ammon, Moab, &c. against which he also testified. Judgments on cities, which brought them to ruin, were *punishments*, because of their *transgressions*, of the inhabitants thereof : and cities without inhabitants, and houses without man, are all the more eloquent witnesses of the literal truth of the word of God, because there is not a man to dwell therein. Empty as well as ruined cities are thus “ warnings ” at this day of the truth of righteous *judgments* ; and as these have proved true, they show that the promises cannot fail.

Literal as the prophecies were, which referred to the return of the Jews and the restoration of Jerusalem after the Babylonish captivity, it is not on them that any man rests the expectation of its future prosperity. Nor need he ; for there are better promises than these for “ the Holy City,” which the Lord did choose, and over which Jesus wept.

In his last recorded prayer the weeping Ezra said, “ I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God : for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens.—And now for a little space (Heb. a moment) grace hath been showed from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us *a little reviving in our bondage*.”¹—There are better promises than that for Israel. “ Theirs are the promises,” said the apostle Paul, more than five hundred years after the death of Ezra.

After the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, Zechariah, in prophesying to the Jews *that were in Judah and Jerusalem*, testified of a future and final restoration, and of Jerusalem’s yet “ future prosperity,” in terms such as these.—“ I, saith Jehovah, will be a wall of fire round about her, and will be the glory in the midst of her. Ho, ho—flee from the land of the north, saith Jehovah : for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of heaven, saith Jehovah.—After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you.—

¹ Ezra ix. 6, 8.

Many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people.—And Jehovah shall inherit Judah his portion, and shall choose Jerusalem again. Be silent, O *all flesh*, before Jehovah: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation.”¹—“In that day I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people—though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it. And *Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem*.—And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, &c.—In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.—I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and try them as gold is tried.—And Jehovah shall be king over all the earth.—And there shall be no more utter destruction, but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.”² The spirit of prophecy is not “bound down” to ruined cities; and is not to be dragged back to the days of Ezra.

“The Old Testament,” says Butler, “contains an account of God’s making a covenant with a particular *nation*, that they should be his people, and he would be their God, in a peculiar sense, . . . insomuch that this one nation should *continue* to be the observation and the wonder of all the world. It declares particularly, that ‘God would scatter them among all people, from one end of the earth unto the other;’ but that, ‘when they should return unto the Lord their God, he would have compassion upon them, and gather them, from all the nations whither he had scattered them;’ that ‘Israel should be saved in the Lord, with an everlasting salvation, and not be ashamed or confounded, world without end.’ And as some of these promises are conditional, others are as absolute as anything can be expressed, that the time should come when ‘the people should be all righteous, and inherit the land for ever;’ that ‘though God would make a full end of all nations whither he had scattered them, yet would he not make a full end of them;’ that ‘he would bring again the captivity of his people Israel, and plant them upon their land, and they should be no more pulled up out of their land;’ that ‘the seed of Israel should not cease from being a nation for ever.’”³

Such prophecies, and many more, do not refer to the “restoration by Ezra;” but Mr Stanley farther wrote, as if they did:—

¹ Zech. ii. 5–13.

² Zech. xii. 3, 6, 10; xiii. 1, 9; xiv. 9, 11.

³ Deut. xxviii. 64; xxx. 2, 3. Isa. xlv. 17; lx. 21. Jer. xxx. 11; xlv. 28. Amos ix. 15. Jer. xxxi. 36.

"It is possible," he says, "that, in the changes of the Turkish empire, Palestine *may* again become a civilized country, under Greek or Latin influences; that the Jewish race, so wonderfully preserved, *may* yet have another stage of national existence opened to them; that they *may* once more obtain possession of their native land, and invest it with an interest greater than it could have been under any other circumstances. But the localities of Syria, (!) no less than common sense (!) and piety (!), warn us against confounding these speculations (?) with divine revelations, or against staking the truth of Christianity and the authority of the sacred records on the chances of local and political revolutions." P. 268.

The sure word of prophecy—to which, says the apostle, ye do well to take heed—speaks not of what may be, but of what shall be, and *must be done*.

But holding, in truth, to the authority of the sacred records, and believing that the Scriptures cannot be broken, is it "common sense" to say, that six hundred thousand men of the children of Israel, with their wives and children, were sustained for forty years in the waste howling wilderness without miracles?—that the Transjordanic tribes, who had for six centuries so many cities of their inheritance, were Bedouins?—is it common sense to say, that the great city Tyre, which was cast into the midst of the water, which was to be *no more*, and is no more, "was always speedily rebuilt," though *it* lies to this day where it was laid, and *is* a place for the spreading of nets, *in the midst of the sea*?—is it common sense to say, that "for ever and for ever" terminated with the race of Esau?—or that all the promises concerning Jerusalem and the seed of Jacob had reference to the days of Ezra? Is it common sense to say that divine revelations are not true? or that the Lord will not do the thing which he hath spoken? What is the "piety" which stakes political revolutions upon "chances?" Or is that which Mr Stanley calls "common sense" that which is mis-called rationalism?

An argument may be known by the conclusion to which it leads, whether it be according to common sense or not, when tried by that to which it appeals. Mr Stanley's "argument" against the *literal*, and in behalf of the poetical, interpretation of the prophecies, actually concludes thus:—

"In like manner [that is, see above, as for ever and for ever ended at the farthest with the race of Esau] the curtain of prophecy falls on the Holy City, when 'Jerusalem was trodden down' (Luke xxi. 24) by the armies of Titus. Its successive revivals under Hadrian (!), Constantine, Omar (!), and Godfrey (?), as well as its present degradation (!), and its future vicissitudes (!), are alike beyond the scope of the sacred volume." (!) P. 268.

The whole text, thus partially quoted, and very poetically interpreted, is in these words of Jesus Christ, "And they (the Jews) shall fall by the edge of the sword [*literal*], and shall be led captive into all

nations [*literal*]: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles [*literal*], *until* the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled [*yet future*]." This prophecy of Jesus Christ—who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever—does not speak of the treading down of Jerusalem "by the armies of Titus;" but, *after* saying that the Jews should be led captive into all nations—which they were *AFTER* Jerusalem was trodden down by the armies of Titus—he added, "and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the *Gentiles* (the nations), *until* the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." He to whom all power in heaven and in earth is given, thus connects—as many other Scriptures also connect—the completion of the times of the Gentiles with the termination of the time of the treading down of Jerusalem by them. In like manner Jesus said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem—behold *your house is left unto you desolate*, and ye shall see me no more *till* ye say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," &c. But neither he, nor any prophet, ever said, that "the curtain of prophecy" shall fall on Jerusalem, when the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled. Hadrian, Constantine, Omar, and Godfrey, and all who have ever trodden down Jerusalem to this day, were Gentiles, not Jews. To say that the past and present degradation of Jerusalem, its future vicissitudes, and even its final destiny, "are alike beyond the scope of the sacred volume," is to deny what the sacred volume affirms, and to gainsay what Jesus said, and what many prophets have spoken.¹

¹ "Thy holy cities are a wilderness, Zion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation. Our holy and beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned with fire: and all our pleasant things are laid waste. Wilt thou refrain thyself for these things, O Lord?" (Isa. lxiv. 10-11.) "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed," &c. (Isa. xxxiii. 20-24.) "But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion upon the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me. Thy children shall make haste; thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee. Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. *As I live, saith Jehovah*, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all—for thy waste and desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away," &c. (Isa. xlix. 14-19.) "Awake! awake! put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake thyself from the dust: arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion," &c. (Isa. lii. 1-2.) "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, *until* the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth, &c.—Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate, &c.—I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord (are his remembrancers), keep not silence, give him no rest, *till* he establish, and *till* he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. *The Lord hath sworn* by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat to thine enemies, &c.—Thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken" (Isa. lxiii.) "They shall call thee, The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations" (Isa. lx. 14, 15).

That Mr Stanley's own testimony to geographical facts, when compared with the Scriptures in which these things were expressly foretold, refutes his own argument against the literal fulfilment of prophecy, and reverses his assertions concerning the sites of Syrian or Arabian cities, that they are a "convincing proof" that the prophecies are not literal,—needs not to be said, when thus it can be seen. Were poetical interpretations to be multiplied without number, they could never thus demonstrate, were such their aim, that the prophets spake by *inspiration of God*.

"I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries into desolation" (Lev. xxvi. 31). "Yet the defenced city shall be desolate, and the habitation forsaken, and left like a wilderness" (Isa. xxvii. 10). "The palaces shall be forsaken, the multitude of the city shall be left, the forts and towers shall be for dens for ever, until," &c. (Isa. xxxii. 14, 15).

"The land shall be utterly emptied.—It is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws—therefore hath the curse devoured the land, and they that dwell therein are desolate, and few men left" (Isa. xxiv.)

"The vision of Isaiah concerning Judah and Jerusalem:—Your country desolate, your cities burned with fire; your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate as overthrown by strangers" (i. 1, 7). "The *spoilers* have come upon all high places through the *wilderness*;—no flesh shall have peace" (Jer. xii. 12). "The *robbers* shall enter into it," &c. (Ezek. vii. 22).

"Your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste" (Lev. xxvi. 38). "The holy cities are a wilderness;—all our pleasant things are laid waste" (Isa. lxiv. 10, 11). "They have trodden my portion under foot; they have made *my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness*" (Jer. xii. 10).

"This is the most convenient place for noticing a peculiarity of the present aspect of Palestine, which is so closely connected, both with its outward imagery and general situation, that it cannot be omitted. Above all other countries in the world, it is a *Land of Ruins* (*sic*). There is no country in which they are so numerous, none in which they bear so large a proportion to the villages and towns still in existence. . . . Not even in Rome or Athens, hardly in Egyptian Thebes, can ancient buildings be found in such magnitude and such profusion as at Baalbec, Jerash, and Palmyra." P. 118.

"In Judea it is hardly an exaggeration to say that whilst for miles and miles *there is no appearance of present life or habitation*, except the occasional goat-herd on the hill-side, or gathering of women at the wells, there is yet hardly a hill-top of the many within sight which is not covered by the vestiges of some fortress or city of former ages." P. 118.

"Palestine is 'an island in the midst of pirates.' The Bedouin tribes are the corsairs of the wilderness; the plains which run into the mountains are the creeks into which they naturally penetrate. Far up the plains of Philistia and Sharon, come the Arabs of the Tih; deep into the centre of Palestine, into the plain of Esdraelon, come the Arabs of the Hauran and of Gilead." P. 135.

"Palestine is well distinguished not merely as 'a land of wheat and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates, of oil-olive and honey,' but emphatically as 'a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of plains and mountains,'" &c. P. 123. "The countless ruins of Palestine, of whatever date they may be, tell us at a glance that we must not judge the resources of the *ancient land* by its *present depressed and desolate state*." P. 120.

"The highways lie waste, the wayfar-
ing man ceaseth" (Isa. xxxiii. 8).

"Roads for wheeled carriages are
now unknown in any part of Palestine."
P. 134.

"And he (Jehovah) said, Go, and tell
this people, Hear ye indeed, but under-
stand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive
not. Make the heart of this people fat,
lest they see and convert, and be healed.
Then said I, Lord, how long? And he
answered, Until the cities be wasted with-
out inhabitant, and the houses without
man," &c. (Isa. vi. 9-11). "In that day
shall his strong cities be as a forsaken
bough, and an uppermost branch, which
they left because of the children of
Israel" (Isa. xvii. 9). "Of a truth
many houses shall be desolate, even
great and fair, without inhabitant"
(Isa. v. 9), &c.

"In Eastern Palestine, the ancient
cities remain, in like manner, *deserted*,
ruined, but standing; not mere masses
and heaps of stone, but *towns* and *houses*,
in amount and in a state of preservation
which have no parallel except in the cities
of Herculaneum and Pompeii," &c.; "the
hundreds of *deserted* villages which stand
on the red desert of the Hauran." "But
the general fact of the ruins of Palestine,
whether erect or fallen, remains common
to the whole country. . . . We now
see this aspect brought out in a fuller
aspect than ever before," &c. P. 119.

"Until the cities be wasted without in-
habitant, and the houses without man,
and the land be utterly desolate, and the
Lord have removed men far away, and
there be a great forsaking in the midst
of the land.—Yet in it shall be a *tenth*"
(Isa. vi. 11-13).

"The countless ruins of Palestine show
us not only that 'Syria might support
tenfold its present population, and bring
forth *tenfold* its present produce,' but
that it *actually did so*." P. 120.

"As long as it lieth desolate, and ye be
in your enemies' land; even then shall
the land rest.—As long as it lieth deso-
late it shall rest," &c. (Lev. xxvi. 34, 35).
"Lift up thy feet unto the perpetual
desolations" (Ps. lxxiv. 3). "They shall
build the *old* wastes, they shall raise up
the former desolations, and they shall
repair the waste cities, the *desolations of*
many generations" (Isa. lxi. 4). "Moab
shall be a *perpetual desolation*, the rem-
nant of my people shall possess them"
(Zeph. ii. 9).

"This difference between the *ruins*
of the two regions of Palestine arises,
no doubt, from the circumstance, that
whereas Eastern Syria has been for the
last *four hundred years* entirely, for
the last *fifteen hundred years* nearly,
deserted by civilized, almost by bar-
barian, man, Western Palestine has
always been the resort of a popula-
tion which, however rude and scanty,
has been sufficiently numerous and
energetic to destroy and to appropriate
edifices which, in the less frequented
parts beyond the Jordan, have escaped
through neglect and isolation." P.
118.

"Beth-el shall come to nought" (Amos
v. 5).

"Beth-el, 'the house of God,' has be-
come literally Beth-aven, 'the house of
nought.'" P. 220.

¹ Without subscribing to all the statements in this sentence, enough is stated to show the long-continued desolations, from whatever cause, of Palestine, while the people Israel have been in their enemies' land, and "scattered among the nations." The subject pertains to prophetic history.

² "When Josiah," says Stanley, "passed through it, it was to destroy and not to build up. . . . From that time (!) the desolation foretold by Amos and Hosea has never been disturbed, and Beth-el, &c." Josiah brake down the altar and the high place, and burned the grove (2 Kings xxiii. 15), but he did not destroy the city (ver. 17). After the Babylonish captivity, *men of Bethel* returned to it. "The ruins of Bethel cover a space of three or four acres. The ruined churches upon the site and beyond the valley betoken a town of considerable importance even down to the middle ages."—*Robinson*, vol. i. pp. 448, 450.

"Therefore for your sake shall Zion be plowed as a *field*" (Mic. iii. 12). (See below.)

"And Jerusalem shall become heaps" (Mic. iii. 12). "I will make Jerusalem heaps" (Jer. ix. 11).

"Because they called thee an Outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after. Thus saith Jehovah; Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's places, and have mercy on his dwelling-places; and the city shall be builded upon *her own heap*," &c. (Jer. xxx. 17, 18).

"The burden of Tyre.—She is the mart of nations.—Is this your joyous city?" (Isa. xxiii. 1, 7). "Be thou ashamed, O Zidon" (Isa. xxiii. 4). "Son of man, set thy face against Zidon, and prophesy against it.—And there shall be no more a pricking brier unto the house of Israel, nor any grieving thorn of all round about them, that despised them" (Ezek. xxviii. 20–22, 24).

"The Lord hath given a commandment to destroy the strongholds thereof" (Isa. xxiii). "They shall break down thy

"Mount Zion, now for the most part a rough *field*, crowned with the Mosque of David and the angle of the western walls, but then covered with houses to its base." Pp. 188, 189.

"If, as we have before observed, Palestine is a land of ruins, still more emphatically may it be said that Jerusalem is a city of ruins. Here and there a regular street or a well-built European house emerges from the *general crash*, but the general appearance is that of a city which has been burned down in some great conflagration; and this impression is increased to the highest degree when, on penetrating below the surface, the very soil on which the city stands is found to be composed of the ruins of houses, aqueducts, and pillars, reaching to the depth of thirty or forty feet below the foundations of the present houses."¹ P. 182.

"Even if the city were to be rebuilt once more, *the soil on which its new foundations must be laid* would bear witness to the faithfulness of her earlier desolation; . . . not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down." Pp. 182, 183.

"Perhaps no greater stretch of imagination in ancient history is required than to conceive how the two small towns of Tyre and Sidon, as they now exist, could have been the parent cities of Carthage and Cadiz," &c. (P. 266.) "If from the country generally we turn to its two celebrated cities, their *diminutive size* is perhaps the most remarkable feature of their appearance." P. 264.

"The modern town (of Tyre) has very much shrunk within its ancient limits, so that a large part of the island . . .

¹ True it is, that the ruins of Jerusalem reach to the depth of thirty or forty feet below the foundations of the present houses. The writer, on his first visit to that city in 1839, was told by Mr. Nicolayson that, after digging through the ruins to the depth of thirty feet, the ground was not reached, whereon to lay the foundation of a church for the English Mission. On visiting Jerusalem a second time, in 1844, when standing on the top of the Hospital, which had been built in the interval, he spread his hand towards the waste places of Jerusalem, and said to Mr. Critchlaw the architect, "Cannot you build there?" The answer was, "That is what we are now doing. This house was built upon *concrete*." The reason, as then expressed, for asking the question was, that *the city shall be built upon her own heap*. The time to which this Scripture expressly refers is that in which the Lord will bring again the captivity of his people Israel and Judah, and will cause them to return to the land which he gave unto their fathers, and they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king. "Because they called thee Outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after. Thus saith Jehovah. The city shall be builded upon her own heap. . . . And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. . . . The fierce anger of the Lord shall not return, *until* he have done it, and *until* he have performed the intents of his heart: in the *latter days* ye shall consider it. At the same time, saith Jehovah, will I be the God of all the families of Israel," &c. (Jer. xxx. 17–24, &c.)

towers, and destroy thy pleasant houses.
—I shall make thee a desolate city”
(Ezek. xxvi. 12, 19.)

“And they shall lay thy *stones*, &c.,
in the *midst of the water*.—And I will
make thee like the top of a rock: thou
shalt be a place to spread nets upon. . . .
in the midst of the sea.—When I shall
bring up the deep upon thee, and *great
waters shall cover thee*” (Ezek. xxvi. 5,
12, 14, 19).

“Concerning Edom, thus saith the Lord
of hosts.—All the cities thereof shall be
perpetual wastes.—Lo, I will make thee
small among the heathen.—Also Edom
shall be a desolation; every one that
goeth by it shall be astonished.” “I will
stretch out my hand against thee, and I
will make thee most desolate. I will lay
thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate.
—Thou shalt be *desolate, O Mount Seir*”
(Jer. xlix. 7, 13–17; Ezek. xxxv. 3, 4, 15).

“Thy terribleness hath deceived thee,
and the pride of thine heart, O thou that
dweltest in the clefts of the rock, that
holdest the height of the hill; though
thou shouldest make thy *nest* as high as
the eagle, I will bring thee down from
thence, saith the Lord. Thou who
dweltest in the rock, whose *habitation* is
high” (Jer. xlix. 16; Obad. 3).

lies bare and uninhabited; fragments of
columns lying heaped and tangled to-
gether in the waves; large fragments,
too, of masonry of the walls of the old
port, large walls of an ancient castle, and
also of the old cathedral.—This city (on
the mainland) was *entirely destroyed* by
Alexander,” &c. P. 265, *Note*.

“A large part of the island—that is,
what was the island before *Alexander*
*joined it to the shore by the present long
sandy isthmus*—lies bare and unin-
habited; fragments of columns lying
heaped and tangled together *in the
waves*,” &c. P. 265.

“The *ruined cities of Edom* in the
mountains east of the 'Arabah, and the
remains and history of Petra itself, indi-
cate a traffic and a population in these
remote regions which now seem to us in-
conceivable” (Sin. and Pal., p. 28).
“The deserted cities of Edom.”—Petra
“an oasis of vegetation in the *desert
hills*.” P. 95.

“Petra—its excavations. . . . I do not
doubt that, by calculation in all the out-
going ravines, you might count up thou-
sands; but in the most populous part I
could select, I could not number in one
view more than fifty, and generally much
fewer. It is their immense ramifications,
rather than their concentrated effect, that
is remarkable, and this, of course, can no
more be seen in one view than all the
streets of London. The larger excava-
tions are temples; the others may be
divided between modern (*i. e.*, Roman or
Arab) tombs, and *Edomite*, or Horite,
habitations. Round about, or rather
east and west, are masses of crumbling
rock, their faces immediately above this
mass cut out into holes” [nest of the
Edomites].—“Sometimes with Grecian
façades” (P. 89). “One striking feature
of the whole scenery is, that not merely
the excavations and buildings, but the
rocks themselves, are in a constant state
of mouldering decay. You can scarcely
tell where excavation begins, and decay
ends” (P. 80). “You turn up a torrent-
bed in the western cliffs, but soon leave
it to ascend a staircase hewn out of the
rocks—steps not absolutely continuous
now, though probably they once were;
broad steps glowing with the native
colours, which conduct you through
magnificent rocks, *high up* into the vast
cluster of rocks which face Mount Hor
on the north. This staircase is the most

striking instance of what *you see everywhere*. Wherever you turn your eyes along the excavated sides of the rock, you see steps, often leading to nothing, or to something that has crumbled away, so that they are now inaccessible; sometimes as mere ornaments in the façade, but everywhere seen even more than the caves themselves. High up in these rocks is another temple—El Deir. . . . Ruins lie above, below, and around it." P. 92.

"No man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it" (Jer. xlix. 18). "If grape-gatherers come to thee, would they not leave some gleanings of grapes? If thieves by night, they will destroy till they have enough. But I have made Esau bare," &c. (Obad. 5; Jer. xlix. 9, 10).

"Here [the Sik] they are most numerous; the rock is honeycombed with cavities of all shapes and sizes.—Once more the defile closes with its excavations, and once more in the area of Petra itself; the torrent bed passing now through *absolute desolation and silence*, though strewn with fragments which show that you once entered on a splendid and busy city gathered around its rocky banks, as along the quays of some great northern river." P. 92.

Mr Stanley thus supplies to every impartial reader the means of judging whether these "geographical facts—happily," he says, "the most stubborn of all,"—which he himself records, do not accord as closely with the sure word of prophecy as his own poetical interpretations clearly discord with scriptural testimonies.

It might well seem to be a grievous charge against a "Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History," that he maintains any theories so opposite to scriptural truths as that the Israelites were not sustained, for forty years in the wilderness, by miracles,—that as far back as the history and language of Palestine reaches, the aspect of ruins was familiar to the inhabitants of the country,—that the Transjordanic tribes were Bedouins, and their "walled and unwalled cities" were called villages (or rather camps) of tents,—or that it is "as unwarranted by facts as it is mistaken in idea" to apply the words of the prophets as they themselves applied them. If unhappily the Rev. Dr Stanley, who now holds that office in Oxford, still retains such opinions, or holds to such arguments in support of them, he only thereby adds to other sad proofs, that one of "the two eyes of England"—if the disease has not passed all human remedy—has all the more need of Mansel's couching.¹

¹ Mr Mansel concludes the Preface of his work on the "Limits of Religious Thought" with these apposite remarks:—"Connected as the present author has been for many years with the studies of Oxford, of which those (Butler's) writings have long formed an important part, he feels that he would be wanting in his duty to the University, to which he owes so much, were he to hesitate to declare, at this time, his deep rooted and increasing conviction, that sound religious philosophy will flourish or fade within her walls, according as she perseveres or neglects to study the works and cultivate the spirit of her great son and teacher, Bishop Butler." P. x.

The literal fulfilment of prophecy stands in no need of any "partial advocate," or questionable argument, when geographical facts, recorded by those who deny it, are the self-same things which the prophets foretold. But facts extorted from unwilling witnesses are often the most conclusive of proofs. Truth has nothing to fear, even from those who are the most opposed to it. The writer thus does plead guilty to a partiality for such proofs of the inspiration of Scripture as enemies, condemned out of their own mouths, supply. In other treatises he has shown, from their own testimonies or arguments, what good and unchallengeable witnesses, besides Volney, Porphyry, Gibbon, and Hume are, when once it is seen that the spirit of prophecy had forestalled them in the facts they testify or the arguments they use. He would not now painfully add another name, though Stanley's testimony to geographical facts which the prophets foretold is more than a sufficient refutation of his argument against the literal fulfilment of prophecy. Acting on the same principle of a preference or partiality to the testimonies of those who are the most prejudiced or hostile to the truths which their own evidence confirms, in a new volume nearly ready for the press the writer excludes all but Romanists alone, as witnesses to all the prophecies concerning Romanism, without any interpretations except those which Scripture supplies. As a farther mean of settling the question between poetical interpretations of the prophecies and their literal fulfilment, if Dr Stanley adhere to the former, he is invited—on a subject which now lies within his peculiar province—with his inventive genius, graphic powers, and ready pen, to adduce any poetical interpretation of all these prophecies, which can stand a comparison, in sober reason or true rationalism, with the *literal* confirmation of all that the Spirit hath expressly testified concerning the apostasy, &c., to which popes, cardinals, canonists, and other Roman Catholic authorities bear complete and involuntary witness, down to the present day.

EVIDENCE OF PROPHECY.

INTRODUCTION.

No subject can be of greater importance, either to the unbeliever or to the Christian, than an investigation of the evidence of Christianity. The former, if his mind be not fettered by the strongest prejudice, and if he be actuated in the least by a spirit of free and fair inquiry, cannot disavow his obligation to examine its claim to a divine origin. He cannot rest secure in his unbelief, nor have fair ground of satisfaction in his own mind, without manifest danger of the most fatal error, till he has impartially weighed all the reasons that may be urged on behalf of revealed truth. The proof of a negative is acknowledged and felt to be difficult ; and it can never, in any case, be attained, till all direct and positive evidence in favour of the affirmative be completely destroyed. And this, at least, must be done before it can be proved that Christianity is not true. Without this careful and candid examination, all gratuitous assumptions and fanciful speculations, all hypothetical reasonings, or analogical inferences, that seem to militate against the truth of religion, may be totally erroneous ; and though they may tend to excite a transient doubt, they cannot justify a settled unbelief. Being exclusively regarded, or being united

to a misapprehension of the real nature of the Christian religion, the understanding may embrace them as convincing ; but such conviction is neither rational nor consistent, it is only a misapplication of the name of freethinking. For, as Christianity appeals to reason and submits its credentials,—as it courts and commands the most trying scrutiny, that scrutiny the unbeliever is bound, upon his own principles, to engage in. If he be fearless of wavering in his unbelief, he will not shrink from the inquiry ; or, if truth be his object, he will not resist the only means of its attainment, that he may either disprove what he could only doubt of before, or yield to the conviction of positive evidence and undoubted truth. This unhesitating challenge religion gives ; and that man is neither a champion of infidelity, nor a lover of wisdom or of truth, who will disown or decline it.

To the believer such a subject is equally important and interesting. The apathy of nominal Christians, in the present day, is often contrasted with the zeal of those who first became obedient to the faith. The moral influence of the Christian religion is not what it has been, or what it ought to be. The difference in the character of its professors may be greatly attributed to a fainter impression and less confident assurance of its truth. Those early converts who witnessed the miracles of our Lord and of his apostles, and heard their divine doctrine, and they who received the immediate tradition of those who both saw and heard them, and who could themselves compare the moral darkness from which they had emerged, with the marvellous light of the gospel, founded their faith upon evidence ; possessed the firmest conviction of the truth ; were distinguished by their virtues, as well as by their profession, according to the testimony even of their enemies ;¹ cherished the consolations, and were

¹ Plinii Epist. lib. x. ep. 97. Tertul. Ap. c. 2. Gibbon, c. 15. vol. ii. p. 315, 317, edit. Lond. 1815.

inspired by the hopes of religion ; and lived and died, actuated by the hope of immortality and the certainty of a future state. The contrast, unhappily, needs no elucidation. The lives of professing Christians, in general, cease to add a confirmation to the truth of Christianity, while they have often been the plea of infidels against it. Yet religion and human nature are still the same as they were when men were first called Christians, and when the believers in Jesus dishonoured not his name. But they sought more than a passive and unexamining belief. They knew in whom they believed ; they felt the power of every truth which they professed. And the same cause in active operation, would be productive of the same effects. The same strong and unwavering faith established on reason and conscious conviction, would be creative of the same peace and joy in believing, and of all their accompanying fruits. And as a mean of destroying the distinction, wherever it exists, between the profession and the reality of faith, it is ever the prescribed duty of all, who profess to believe in the gospel, to search and to try, "to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good," and to "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them."¹

To the sincere Christian it must ever be an object of the highest interest to search into the reason of his hope. The farther that he searches, the firmer will be his belief. Knowledge is the fruit of mental labour, the food and the feast of the mind. In the pursuit of knowledge, the greater the excellence of the subject of inquiry, the deeper ought to be the interest, the more ardent the investigation, and the dearer to the mind the acquisition of the truth. And that knowledge which immediately affects the soul, which tends to exalt the moral nature and enlarge the religious capa-

¹ 1 Thess. v. 21. 1 Peter iii. 15.

cities of man, which pertains to eternity, which leads not merely to the contemplation of the works of the great Architect of the universe, but seeks also to discover an accredited revelation of his will and a way to his favour, and which rests not in its progress till it find assurance of faith or complete conviction, a witness without as well as a witness within, is surely, "like unto a treasure which a man found hid in a field, and sold all that he had and bought it."¹ And it is delightful to have every doubt removed by the positive proof of the truth of Christianity,—to feel that conviction of its certainty, which infidelity can never impart to her votaries,—and to receive that assurance of the faith, which is as superior in the hope which it communicates as in the certainty on which it rests, to the cheerless and disquieting doubts of the unbelieving mind. Instead of being a mere prejudice of education, which may be easily shaken, belief, thus founded on reason, becomes fixed and immovable; and all the scoffings of the scorner, and speculations of the infidel, lie as lightly on the mind, or pass as imperceptibly over it, and make as little impression there, as the spray upon a rock.

In premising a few remarks, introductory to a sketch of the prophecies, little can be said on the general and comprehensive evidence of Christianity. The selection of a part implies no disparagement to the whole. Ample means for the confirmation of our faith are within our reach. Newton, Bacon, and Locke, whose names stand pre-eminent in human science, to which they opened a path not penetrated before, found proof sufficient for the complete satisfaction of *their* minds. The internal evidence could not be stronger than it is. There are manifold instances of undesigned coincidences in the Acts and Epistles of the apostles, which give intrinsic proof that they are genuine and authentic. No

¹ Matt. xiii. 44-46.

better precepts, no stronger motives, than the gospel contains, have ever been inculcated. No system of religion has ever existed in the world at all to be compared to it; and none can be conceived more completely adapted to the necessities and nature of a sinful being like man, endowed with the faculty of reason and with capacities of religion. And the miracles were of such a nature as excluded the idea of artifice or delusion;—they were wrought openly in the presence of multitudes; they testified the benevolence of a Saviour, as well as the power of the Son of God. The disciples of Christ could not be deceived respecting them; for they were themselves endowed with the gift of tongues and of prophesying, and with the power of working miracles; they devoted their lives to the propagation of the gospel, in opposition to every human interest, and amidst continual sufferings. The Christian religion was speedily propagated throughout the whole extent of the Roman empire, and even beyond its bounds. The written testimony remains of many who became converts to the truth, and martyrs to its cause: and the most zealous and active enemies of our faith acknowledged the truth of the miracles, and attributed them to the agency of evil spirits. Yet all this accumulation of evidence is disregarded, and every testimony is rejected unheard, because ages have since intervened, and because it bears witness to works that are miraculous. Though these general objections against the truth of Christianity have been ably answered and exposed, yet they may fairly be adduced as confirmatory of the proof which results from the fulfilment of prophecy, and as binding infidels to its investigation. For it supplies that evidence which the enemies of religion, or those who are weak in the faith, would require, which applies to the present time, and which stands not in need of any testimony,—which is always attainable by the researches of the inquisitive, and often obvious to the

notice of all,—and which past, present, and coming events alike unite in verifying;—it affords an increasing evidence, and receives additional attestations in each succeeding age.

But, while some subterfuge has been sought for evading the force of the internal evidence, and the conviction which a belief in the miracles would infallibly produce, and while every collateral proof is neglected, the prophecies also are set aside without investigation, as of too vague and indefinite a nature to be applied, with certainty, to the history either of past ages or of the present. A very faint view of the prophecies of the Old and New Testament will suffice to rectify this equally easy and erroneous conclusion. Although some of the prophecies, separately considered, may appear ambiguous and obscure, yet a general view of them all—of the harmony which prevails throughout the prophecies, and of their adaptation to the facts they predict—must strike the mind of the most careless inquirer with an apprehension that they are the dictates of Omniscience. But many of the prophecies are as explicit and direct as it is possible that they could have been; and, as history confirms their truth, so they sometimes tend to its illustration, of which our future inquiry will furnish us with examples. And if the prophetic part of Scripture, which refers to the rise and fall of kingdoms, had been more explicit than it is, it would have been a communication of the foreknowledge of events which men would have grossly abused and perverted to other purposes rather than to the establishment of the truth; and, instead of being a stronger evidence of Christianity, it would have been considered as the cause of the accomplishment of the events predicted, by the unity and combination it would have excited among Christians; and thus have afforded to the unbeliever a more reasonable objection against the evidence of prophecy than any that can be now alleged.

It is in cases wherein they could not be abused, or wherein the agents instrumental in their fulfilment were utterly ignorant of their existence, that the prophecies are as descriptive as history itself. But whenever the knowledge of future events would have proved prejudicial to the peace and happiness of the world, they are couched in allegory, which their accomplishment alone can expound; and drawn with that degree of light and shade that the faithfulness of the picture may best be seen from the proper point of observation, the period of their completion. Prophecy must thus, in many instances, have that darkness which is impenetrable at first, as well as that light which shall be able to dispel every doubt at last; and, as it cannot be an evidence of Christianity until the event demonstrate its own truth, it may remain obscure till history become its interpreter, and not be perfectly obvious till the fulfilment of the whole series with which it is connected. But the general and often sole objection against the evidence from the prophecies, that they are all vague and ambiguous, may best be answered and set aside by a simple exhibition of those numerous and distinct predictions which have been literally accomplished; and therefore to this limited view of them the following pages shall chiefly be confined.

Little need be said on the nature of proof from prophecy. That it is the effect of divine interposition cannot be disputed. It is equivalent to any miracle, and is of itself evidently miraculous. The foreknowledge of the actions of intelligent and moral agents is one of the most incomprehensible attributes of the Deity, and is exclusively a divine perfection. The past, the present, and the future, are alike open to his view, and to his alone; and there can be no stronger proof of the interposition of the Most High, than that which prophecy affords. Of all the attributes of the God of the Universe, his prescience has bewildered, and baffled the most,

all the powers of human perception; and an evidence of the exercise of this perfection in the revelation of what the infinite mind alone could make known, is the seal of God, which can never be counterfeited, affixed to the truth which it attests. Whether that evidence has been afforded, is a matter of investigation; but if it has unquestionably been given, the effect of superhuman agency is apparent, and the truth of what it was given to prove, does not admit of a doubt. If the prophecies of the Scriptures can be proved to be genuine; if they be of such a nature as no foresight of man could possibly have predicted; if the events foretold in them were described hundreds or even thousands of years before those events became parts of the history of man; and if the history itself correspond with the prediction: then the evidence which the prophecies impart is a sign and a wonder to every age; no clearer testimony or greater assurance of the truth can be given; and *if men do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.*¹ Even if one were to rise from the dead, evidence of the fact must precede conviction; and if the mind be satisfied of the truth of prophecy, the result, in either case, is the same. The voice of Omnipotence alone could call the dead from the tomb; the voice of Omniscience alone could tell all that lay hid in dark futurity, which to man is as impenetrable as the mansions of the dead; and both are alike the voice of God.

Of the antiquity of the Scriptures there is the amplest proof. The books of the Old Testament were not, like other writings, detached and unconnected efforts of genius and research, or mere subjects of amusement or instruction. They were essential to the constitution of the Jewish state; the possession of them was a great cause of the peculiarities of that people; and they contain their moral and their civil

¹ Luke xvi. 31.

law, and their history, as well as the prophecies, of which they were the records and the guardians. They were received by the Jews as of divine authority; and as such they were published and preserved. They were proved to be ancient eighteen hundred years ago.¹ And in express reference to the prophecies concerning the Messiah, contained in them, they were denominated by Tacitus, the *ancient* writings of the priests. Instead of being secluded from observation, they were translated into Greek above two hundred and fifty years before the Christian era; and they were read in the synagogues every Sabbath-day. The most ancient part of them was received, as divinely inspired, and was preserved in their own language by the Samaritans, who were at enmity with the Jews. They have ever been sacredly kept unaltered, in a more remarkable degree, and with a more scrupulous care, than any other compositions whatever.² And the antiquity and authenticity of them rest so little on Christian testimony alone, that it is from the records of our enemies that they are confirmed, and from which is derived the evidence of our faith. Even the very language in which the Old Testament Scriptures were originally written, had ceased to be spoken before the coming of Christ. No stronger evidence of their antiquity could be alleged, than what is indisputably true; and if it were to be questioned, every other truth of ancient history must first be set aside.

That the prediction was prior to the event, many facts in the present state of the world abundantly testify; and many

¹ Josephus c. Apion.

² There are not wanting proofs of the most scrupulous care of the Hebrew text on the part of the Jews: they have counted the large and small sections, the verses, the words, and even the letters in some of the books. They have likewise reckoned which is the middle letter of the Pentateuch, which is the middle clause of each book, and how many times each letter of the alphabet occurs in all the Hebrew Scriptures. This, at least, shows that the Jews were religiously careful to preserve the literal sense of Scripture.—(Allen's Modern Judaism. Simon, Crit. Hist. 6, 26.)

prophecies remain even yet to be fulfilled. But, independently of external testimony, the prophecies themselves bear intrinsic marks of their antiquity, and of their truth. Predictions concerning the same events are sometimes delivered by a succession of prophets. Sometimes the same prophecy concerning any city or nation gradually meets its fulfilment during a long protracted period, where the truth of the prediction must be unfolded by degrees. They are, in general, so interwoven with the history of the Jews ; so casually introduced in their application to the surrounding nations ; so frequently concealed in their purport, even from the honoured but unconscious organs of their communication, and preserving throughout so entire a consistency ; so different in the modes of their narration, and each part preserving its own particular character ; so delivered without form or system ; so shadowed sometimes under symbols ; so complete when compared and combined ; so apparently unconnected when disjoined, and revealed in such a variety of modes and expressions, that the very manner of their conveyance forbids the idea of artifice : or if they were false, nothing could admit of more easy detection ; if true, nothing could be more impossible to have been conceived by man. And they must either be a number of incoherent and detached pretensions to inspiration, that can bear no scrutiny, and that have no reference to futurity but what deceivers might have devised ; or else, as the only alternative, they give such a comprehensive, yet minute representation of future events—so various, yet so distinct—so distant, yet so true—that none but He who knoweth all things could have revealed them to man, and none but those who have hardened their hearts and closed their eyes, can forbear from feeling and from perceiving them to be credentials of the truth, clear as light from heaven. To justify their pretensions to their contemporaries, the prophets referred, on particular occa-

sions, to some approaching circumstance as a proof of their prophetic spirit, and as a symbol or representation of a more distant and important event. They could thus be distinguished in their own age from false prophets, if their predictions were then true: and they ventured to raise, from the succeeding ages of the world, that veil which no uninspired mortal could touch. They spoke of a deliverer of the human race; they described the desolation of cities and of nations, whose greatness was then unshaken, and whose splendour has ever since been unrivalled; and their predictions were of such a character, that time would infallibly refute or realize them.

Religion deserves a candid examination, and it demands nothing more. The fulfilment of prophecy forms part of the evidence of Christianity. And are the prophecies false, or are they true? Is their fallacy exposed, or their truth ratified by the event? And whether are they thus proved to be the delusions of impostors, or the dictates of inspiration? To the solution of these questions a patient and impartial inquiry alone is requisite; reason alone is appealed to, and no other faith is here necessary but that which arises as the natural and spontaneous fruit of rational conviction. The man who withholds this inquiry, and who will not be impartially guided by its result, is not only reckless of his fate, but devoid of that on which he prides himself the most,—even of all true liberality of sentiment: he is the bigot of infidelity, who will not believe the truth because it is the truth. It is incontestable, that, in a variety of ways, a marvellous change has taken place in the religious and political state of the world since the prophecies were delivered. A system of religion, widely different from any that then existed, has emanated from the land of Judea, and has spread over the civilized world. Many remarkable circumstances attended its origin and its progress. The history

of the life and character of its Founder, as it was written at the time, and acknowledged as authentic by those who believed on him, is so completely without a parallel, that it has often attracted the admiration, and excited the astonishment of infidels ; and one of them even asks, if it be possible that the sacred Personage, whose history the Scripture contains, should be himself a mere man ; and acknowledges that the fiction of such a character is more inconceivable than the reality.¹ He possessed no temporal power,—he inculcated every virtue, his life was spotless and perfect as his doctrine,—he was put to death as a criminal. His religion was rapidly propagated,—his followers were persecuted, but their cause prevailed. The purity of his doctrine was maintained for a time, but it was afterwards corrupted. Yet Christianity has effected a great change. Since its establishment, the worship of heathen deities has ceased ; all sacrifices have been abolished, even where human victims were immolated before ; and slavery, which prevailed in every state, is now unknown in every Christian country throughout Europe ;—knowledge has been increased, and many nations have been civilized. The Christian religion has been extended over a great part of the world, and it is still enlarging its boundary ; and the Jews, though it originated among them, yet continue to reject it. In regard to the political changes or revolutions of states, since the prophecies concerning them were delivered,—Jerusalem was destroyed and laid waste by the Romans : the land of Palestine, and the surrounding countries, are now thinly inhabited, and, in comparison of their former fertility, have been almost converted into deserts : the Jews have been scattered among the nations, and remain to this day a dispersed and yet a distinct people : Egypt, one of the first and most powerful of nations, long ceased to be a kingdom : Nineveh is no

¹ Rousseau's *Emilius*, vol. ii. p. 215, quoted in Brewster's *Testimonies*, p. 133.

more: Babylon is now a ruin: the Persian empire succeeded to the Babylonian: the Grecian empire succeeded to the Persian, and the Roman to the Grecian: the old Roman empire has been divided into several kingdoms: Rome itself became the seat of a government of a different nature from any other that ever existed in the world: the doctrine of the gospel was transformed into a system of spiritual tyranny and of temporal power: the authority of the pope was held supreme in Europe for many ages: the Saracens obtained a sudden and mighty power; overran great part of Asia and of Europe; and many parts of Christendom suffered much from their incursions: the Arabs maintain their warlike character, and retain possession of their own land: the Africans are a humble race, and are still treated as slaves: colonies have been spread from Europe and Asia, and are enlarging there: the Turkish empire attained to great power; it continued to rise for the space of several centuries, but it paused in its progress, has since decayed, and now evidently verges to its fall. These form some of the most prominent and remarkable facts of the history of the world from the ages of the prophets to the present time; and if to each and all of them, from the first to the last, an index is to be found in the prophecies, we may warrantably conclude that they could only have been revealed by the Ruler among the nations, and that they afford more than human testimony of the truth of Christianity.

In the following treatise an attempt is made to give a general and concise sketch of such of the prophecies as have been distinctly foretold and clearly fulfilled, and as may be deemed sufficient to illustrate the truth of Christianity. And, if one unbeliever be led the first step to a full and candid investigation of the truth,—if one doubting mind be convinced,—if one Christian be confirmed more strongly in

his belief,—if one ray of the hope of better things to come arise from hence, to enliven a single sorrowing heart,—if one atom be added to the mass of evidence, the author of these pages will neither have lost his reward, nor spent his labour in vain.

CHAPTER II.

PROPHECIES CONCERNING CHRIST AND THE CHRISTIAN
RELIGION.

It is one of the remarkable peculiarities of the Jewish religion, that, while it claimed superiority over every other and was distinguished from them all, as alone inculcating the worship of the only living and true God, and while it was perfectly suited to the purpose for which it was designed, it acknowledged that it was itself only preparatory to a future, a better, and perfect revelation. It was professedly adapted and limited to one particular people;—it was confined, in many of its institutions, to the land of Judea; its morality was incomplete; its ritual observances were numerous, oppressive, and devoid of any inherent merit;¹ and being partial, imperfect, and temporary, and full of promises of better things to come, for which it was only the means of preparing the way, it was evidently intended to be the presage of another. It was not even calculated of itself to fulfil the promise which it records as given unto Abraham, that in him all the families of the earth should be blessed; though its original institution was founded upon this promise, and although the accomplishment of it was the great end to be promoted, by the distinction and separation of his descendants from all the nations of the earth. But it was subservient to this end,

¹ “Because they had not executed my judgments, but had despised my statutes, and had polluted my sabbaths, and their eyes were after their fathers’ idols; wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live.” (Ezek. xx. 24, 25. Acts xv. 10.)

though it could not directly accomplish it; for the coming of a Saviour was the great theme of prophecy, and the universal belief of the Jews. From the commencement to the conclusion of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, it is predicted or prefigured. They represent the first act of divine justice, which was exercised on the primogenitors of the human race, as mingled with divine mercy. Before their exclusion from paradise, a gleam of hope was seen to shine around them, in the promise of a suffering but triumphant Deliverer. To Abraham the same promise was conveyed in a more definite form. Jacob spoke distinctly of the coming of a Saviour. Moses, the legislator and leader of the Hebrews, prophesied of another lawgiver that God was to raise up in a future age.¹ And while these early and general predictions occur in the historical part of Scripture, which sufficiently mark the purposed design of the Mosaic dispensation, the books that are avowedly prophetic are clearly descriptive, as a minuter search will attest, of the advent of a Saviour, and of everything pertaining to the kingdom he was to establish. Many things, apparently contradictory and irreconcilable, are foretold as referring to a great Deliverer, whose dignity, whose character, and whose office were altogether peculiar, and in whom the fate of human nature is represented as involved. Many passages that can bear no other application, clearly testify of him: Thy king cometh—thy salvation cometh—the Redeemer shall come to Zion—the Lord cometh—the Messenger of the covenant, he shall come—blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord,² are expressions that occur throughout the prophecies. These unequivocally speak of the coming of a Saviour. But were every other proof wanting, the prophecy of Daniel is sufficient incontroverti-

¹ Dent. xviii. 15, 18.

² Zech. ix. 9. Isa. lxii. 11. Isa. lix. 20. Isa. xxxv. 4. Mal. iii. 1. Psal. cxviii. 26.

bly to establish the fact, which we affirm in the very words,—that the coming of *the Messiah* is foretold in the Old Testament.¹ The same fact is confirmed by the belief of the Jews in every age. It has been so deeply and indelibly impressed on their minds, that notwithstanding the dispersion of their race throughout the world, and the disappointment of their hopes for eighteen hundred years after the prescribed period of his coming, the expectation of the Messiah has hitherto formed a bond of union which no distance could dissolve, and which no earthly power could destroy.

As the Old Testament *does* contain prophecies of a Saviour that was to appear in the world, the only question to be resolved is, whether all that it testifies of him be fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ? On a subject so interesting, so extensive and important, which has been so amply discussed by many able divines, the reader is referred to the works of Barrow, of Pearson, and of Clarke. A summary view must be very imperfect and incomplete; but it is here given, as it may serve to exhibit to the general reader the connection between the Old and the New Testament, and as it may of itself be deemed conclusive of the argument in favour of Christianity.

A few of the leading features of the prophecies concerning Christ, and their fulfilment, shall be traced; as they mark the time of his appearance, the place of his birth, and the family out of which he was to arise; his life and character, his miracles, his sufferings, and his death; the nature of his doctrine, the design and the effect of his coming, and the extent of his kingdom.

The time of the Messiah's appearance in the world, as predicted in the Old Testament, is defined by a number of concurring circumstances, that fix it to the very date of the

¹ Dan. ix. 25, 26.

advent of Christ. The last blessing of Jacob to his sons, when he commanded them to gather themselves together that he might tell them what should befall them in the last days, contains this prediction concerning Judah: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come."¹ The date fixed by this prophecy for the coming of Shiloh, or the Saviour, was not to exceed the time that the descendants of Judah were to continue a united people, that should be governed by their own laws, and should have their judges from among their brethren. The prophecy of Malachi adds another standard for measuring the time; "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts."² No words can be more expressive of the coming of the promised Messiah; and they as clearly imply his appearance in the temple before it should be destroyed. But it may also be here remarked that Malachi was the last of the prophets: with his predictions the vision and the prophecy were sealed up, or the canon of the Old Testament was completed. Though many prophets immediately preceded him, after his time there was no prophet in Israel; but all the Jews, whether of ancient or modern times, look for a messenger to prepare the way of the Lord, immediately before his coming. The long succession of prophets had drawn to a close; and the concluding words of the Old Testament, subjoined to an admonition to remember the law of Moses, import that the next prophet would be the harbinger of the Messiah. Another criterion of the time is thus imparted. In regard to the advent of the Messiah, before the destruction of the second temple, the words of Haggai are remark-

¹ Gen. xlix. 10.² Mal. iii. 1.

ably explicit: "The Desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts.—The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former."¹ The contrast which the prophet had just drawn between the glory of Solomon's temple and that which had been erected in its stead, to which he declares it was, in comparison, as nothing; the excellency of the latter house excelling that of gold and silver; the expression so characteristic of the Messiah, the "desire of all nations;" all denote that He alone is spoken of, who was *the hope of Israel*, and of whom all the prophets did testify, and that his presence would give to *that temple* a greater glory than that of the former. The Saviour was thus to appear, according to the prophecies of the Old Testament, during the time of the continuance of the kingdom of Judah, previous to the demolition of the temple, and immediately subsequent to the next prophet. But the time is rendered yet more definite. In the prophecies of Daniel, the kingdom of the Messiah is not only foretold as commencing in the time of the fourth monarchy, or Roman empire; but the express number of years, that were to precede his coming, are plainly intimated: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks and threescore and two weeks."² Computation by weeks of years was common among the Jews, and every seventh was the sabbatical year; seventy weeks thus amounted to four hundred and ninety years. In these

¹ Hag. ii. 7, 9.² Dan. ix. 24, 25.

words the prophet marks the very time, and uses the very name of Messiah the Prince; and so entirely is all ambiguity done away, that the destruction of the city and the sanctuary, the ceasing of the *sacrifice* and the *oblation*, and the commencement of the long-continued desolation that has ever since ensued, are all definitely marked as consequent on the *cutting off* of Messiah:—"And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary: and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."¹

The plainest inference may be drawn from these prophecies. All of them, while, in every respect, they presuppose the most perfect knowledge of futurity—while they were unquestionably delivered and publicly known for ages previous to the time to which they referred—while there is the testimony, from great authorities among the Jews, of their application to the time of the Messiah²—and while they refer to different contingent and unconnected events, utterly undeterminable and inconceivable by all human sagacity;—accord in perfect unison to a single precise period where all their different lines terminate at once—the very fulness of time when Jesus appeared. A king then reigned over the Jews in their own land; they were governed by their own laws; and the council of their nation exercised its authority and power. Before that period, the other tribes were led

¹ Dan. ix. 26, 27.

² Grotius de Verit. l. v. c. xiv. Opera, tom. iv. p. 80, et Lond. 1679. Pearson on the Creed. Art. ii.

into captivity, from which they never returned; and the Israelites were *outcasts* for ages, before the Jews were *dispersed* among the nations. As an unbroken and unexpatriated tribe, Judah alone remained, and the last sceptre in Israel had not then departed from it. Every stone of the temple was then unmoved: it was the admiration of the Romans, and might have stood for ages. The city was not then destroyed; but it was the flourishing and populous capital of their own land, which was then peopled by four millions of Jews. The sacrifice and oblation were then offered up in Jerusalem, the place appointed for them, and thither from all the land multitudes for that purpose still continued to resort year by year continually. But in a short space, all these concurring testimonies to the time of the advent of the Messiah passed away. About the very time when Christ, in the twelfth year of his age, first publicly appeared in the temple about his Father's business, Archelaus the king was dethroned and banished. Coponius was appointed procurator, and the kingdom of Judea, the last remnant of the greatness of Israel, was debased into a part of the province of Syria.¹ The sceptre was smitten from the hands of the tribe of Judah; their crown fell from their heads; their glory departed; and, soon after the death of Christ, of their temple one stone was not left upon another; their commonwealth itself became as complete a ruin, and was broken in pieces; and they have ever since been scattered throughout the world, a name but not a nation. Every mark that denoted the time of the coming of the Messiah in the flesh, was erased soon after the crucifixion of Christ, and could never afterwards be renewed.²

¹ Joseph. Antiq. lib. xvii. c. 15, (al. 13.) xviii. 1.

² "When the angel says to Daniel, *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, &c.*; Was this written after the event? Or can it reasonably be ascribed to chance, that from the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king, (when Ezra went up from

That the time at which the promised Messiah was to appear is clearly defined in these prophecies; that the expectation of the coming of a great king or deliverer, was then prevalent, not only among the Jews, but among all the eastern nations, in consequence of these prophecies; that it afterwards excited that people to revolt, and proved the cause of their greater destruction,—the impartial and unsuspected evidence of heathen authors is combined, with the reluctant and ample testimony of the Jews themselves, to attest.

Tacitus, Suetonius, Josephus, and Philo, agree in testifying the antiquity of the prophecies, and their acknowledged reference to that period.¹ Even the Jews, to this day, own that the time when their Messiah ought to have appeared,

Babylon unto Jerusalem with a commission to restore the government of the Jews,) to the death of Christ, (from *ann. Nabon.* 290, to *ann. Nabon.* 780,) should be precisely 490 (seventy weeks of) years? When the angel tells Daniel, that in threescore and two weeks the street (of Jerusalem) should be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times; (but this, in troublous times not like those that should be under Messiah the Prince when he should come to reign;) Was this written after the event? Or can it reasonably be ascribed to chance, that from the 28th year of Artaxerxes, when the walls were finished, to the birth of Christ, (from *ann. Nabon.* 311 to 745,) should be precisely 434 (62 weeks of years?) When Daniel further says, And he shall confirm (or, nevertheless he shall confirm) the covenant with many for one week; Was this written after the event? Or can it reasonably be ascribed to chance, that from the death of Christ, (*ann. Dom.* 33,) to the command first given to Peter to preach to Cornelius and the Gentiles (*ann. Dom.* 40,) should be exactly seven (one week of) years? When he still adds, *And in the midst of the week, (and in half a week) he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate*: Was this written after the event? Or can it with any reason be ascribed to chance, that from Vespasian's march into Judea in the spring *ann. Dom.* 67, to the taking of Jerusalem by Titus in the autumn *ann. Dom.* 70, should be half a septenary of years, or three years and a half."—*Clarke's Works*, fol. edit. vol. ii. p. 721.)

¹ "Pluribus persuasio inerat, antiquis sacerdotum literis contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret Oriens, profectique Judæa rerum potirentur. Quæ ambages Vespasianum et Titum prædixerant. Sed vulgus (Judæorum,) more humanæ cupidinis, sibi tantam fatorum magnitudinem interpretati, ne adversis quidem ad vera mutabantur."—(Tacit. Hist. lib. v. cap. xiii.) "Percebueraut Oriente toto vetus et constans opinio, esse in fatis, ut eo tempore Judæa profecti rerum potirentur. Id de imperio Romano, quantum postea eventu patuit, prædictum Judæi ad se trahentes, rebellaverunt." Suet. in Vesp. lib. viii. c. iv. Julius Marathus, quoted by Suetonius, lib. ii. c. xciv. Joseph. de Bello, lib. vi. c. xxxi. (al. c. 5. § 4.) Philo de Præm. et Pen. pp. 923-4. Clarke, &c. &c.

according to their prophecies, is long since past, and they attribute the delay of his coming to the sinfulness of their nation. And thus, from the distinct prophecies themselves, from the testimony of profane historians, and from the concessions of the Jews, every requisite proof is afforded that Christ appeared when all the concurring circumstances of the time denoted the prophesied period of his advent.

The predictions contained in the Old Testament respecting both the family out of which the Messiah was to arise, and the place of his birth, are almost as circumstantial, and are equally applicable to Christ, as those which refer to the time of his appearance. He was to be an Israelite, of the tribe of Judah, of the family of David, and of the town of Bethlehem. The two former of these particulars are implied in the promise made to Abraham—in the prediction of Moses—in the prophetic benediction of Jacob to Judah—and in the reason assigned for the superiority of that tribe, because out of it the chief ruler should arise. And the two last, that the Messiah was to be a descendant of David and a native of Bethlehem, are expressly affirmed. *There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots; and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him.*¹ That this prophecy refers to the Deliverer of the human race, is evident from the whole of the succeeding chapter, which is descriptive of the kingdom of the Messiah, of the calling of the Gentiles, and of the restoration of Israel. The same fact is predicted in many passages of the prophecies;—"Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee.—I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant. *Thy seed* will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign

¹ Isaiah xi. 1, 2.

and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.—This is his name whereby he shall be called, **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.**"¹ The place of the birth of the Messiah is thus clearly foretold :—"Thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth, unto me," or, as the Hebrew word² implies, shall he be born, "that is to be ruler in Israel ; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."³—That all these predictions were fulfilled in Jesus Christ ; that he was of that country, tribe, and family, of the house and lineage of David, and born in Bethlehem,—we have the fullest evidence in the testimony of all the evangelists ; in two distinct accounts of the genealogies, (by natural and legal succession,) which, according to the custom of the Jews, were carefully preserved ; in the acquiescence of the enemies of Christ to the truth of the fact, against which there is not a single surmise in history ; and in the appeal made by some of the earliest of the Christian writers to the records of the census, taken at the very time of our Saviour's birth by order of Cæsar.⁴ Here, indeed, it is impossible not to be struck with the exact fulfilment of prophecies which are apparently contradictory and irreconcilable, and with the manner in which they were providentially accomplished. The spot of Christ's nativity was distant from the place of the abode of his parents, and the region in which he began his ministry was remote from the place of his birth ; and another prophecy respecting him was in this manner verified :—"The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,—by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations—the people that walked in darkness have

¹ 2 Sam. vii. 16. Psal. lxxxix. 3, 4. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.

² Gen. x. 14 ; xvii. 6. 2 Sam. vii. 12, &c.

³ Micah v. 2.

⁴ Justin Mart. Ap. i. p. 55, ed. Thirl. Tert. in Mar. iv. 19. p. 713, ed. Paris. Barrow.

seen a great light ; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.”¹ Thus, the time at which the predicted Messiah was to appear, the nation, the tribe, and the family from which he was to be descended—and the place of his birth—no populous city—but of itself an inconsiderable place, were all clearly foretold; and as clearly refer to Jesus Christ, and all meet their completion in him.

But the facts of his life, and the features of his character, are also drawn with a precision that cannot be misunderstood. The obscurity, the meanness, and poverty of his external condition are thus represented :—“ He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground ; he hath no form nor comeliness ; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. Thus saith the Lord,—to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship.”² That such was the condition in which Christ appeared, the whole history of his life abundantly testifies. And the Jews, looking in the pride of their hearts for an earthly king, disregarded these prophecies concerning him, were deceived by their traditions, and found only a stone of stumbling, where, if they had searched the Scriptures aright, they would have discovered an evidence of the Messiah. “ Is not this the carpenter’s son ; is not this the son of Mary ? said they, and they were offended at him.” His riding in humble triumph into Jerusalem ; his being betrayed for thirty pieces of silver, and scourged, and buffeted, and spit upon ; the piercing of his hands and of his feet ; the last offered draught of vinegar and gall ; the parting of his raiment, and casting lots upon his vesture ; the manner of his death and of his

¹ Isaiah ix. 1, 2. Matt. iv. 15, 16.

² Isaiah liii. ; xlix. 7.

burial, and his rising again without seeing corruption,¹—were all expressly predicted, and all these predictions were literally fulfilled. If all these prophecies admit of any application to the events of the life of any individual, it can only be to that of the Author of Christianity. And what other religion can produce a single fact which was actually foretold of its founder?

Though the personal appearance or mortal condition of the Messiah was represented by the Jewish prophets, such as to bespeak no grandeur, his personal character is described as of a higher order than that of the sons of men. Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips.² He hath done no violence, neither was there any deceit in his mouth.³ The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.⁴ The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.⁵ He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom.⁶ A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench.⁷ Behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass.⁸ He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.⁹ He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.¹⁰ I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting.¹¹ The

¹ Zech. ix. 9; xi. 12. Isaiah l. 6. Psalm xxii. 16; lxix. 21; xxii. 18. Isaiah liii. 9. Psalm xvi. 10.

² Psalm xlv. 2.

³ Isaiah liii. 9.

⁴ xi. 2.

⁵ l. 4.

⁶ Isaiah xl. 11.

⁷ xlii. 3.

⁸ Zech. ix. 9.

⁹ Isaiah xlii. 2.

¹⁰ liii. 7.

¹¹ l. 6.

Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. The Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded ; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.”¹ How many virtues are thus represented in the prophecies, as characteristic of the Messiah ; and how applicable are they all to Christ alone, and how clearly embodied in his character ! His wisdom and knowledge—his speaking as never man spake—the general meekness of his manner and mildness of his conversation—his perfect candour and unsullied purity—his righteousness—his kindness and compassion—his genuine humility—his peaceable disposition—his unrepining patience—his invincible courage—his more than heroic resolution, and more than human forbearance—his unfaltering trust in God, and complete resignation to his will, are all portrayed in the liveliest, the most affecting, and expressive terms ; and among all who ever breathed the breath of life, they can be applied to Christ alone.²

Mohammed pretended to receive a divine warrant to sanction his past impurities, and to license his future crimes. How different is the appeal of Jesus to earth and to heaven : “ If I do not the works of my Father believe me not.—Search the Scriptures, for these are they which testify of me.” They did testify of the coming of a Messiah, and of the superhuman excellence of his moral character. And if the life of Jesus was wonderful and unparalleled of itself, how miraculous does it appear, when all his actions develop the predicted character of the promised Saviour ! The internal and external evidences are here combined at once ; and while the life of Christ proved that he was a righteous person, it proved also, as testified of by the prophets, that he was the Son of God.

In describing the blessings of the reign of the Messiah,

¹ Isaiah l. 5, 7.

² See Barrow on the Creed, p. 19.

the prophet Isaiah foretold the greatness and the benignity of his miracles:—"The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped: then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing."¹ The history of Jesus shows how such acts of mercy formed the frequent exercise of his power: at his word the blind received their sight, the lame walked, the deaf heard, and the dumb spake.²

The death of Christ was as unparalleled as his life: and the prophecies are as minutely descriptive of his sufferings as of his virtues. Not only did the paschal lamb which was to be killed every year in all the families of Israel—which was to be taken out of the flock, to be without blemish—to be eaten with bitter herbs—to have its blood sprinkled, and to be kept whole that not a bone of it should be broken; not only did the offering up of Isaac, and the lifting up of the brazen serpent in the wilderness, by looking upon which the people were healed,—and many ritual observances of the Jews,—prefigure the manner of Christ's death, and the sacrifice which was to be made for sin; but many express declarations abound in the prophecies, that Christ was indeed to suffer. Exclusive of the repeated declarations in the Psalms,³ of afflictions which apply literally to him, and are interwoven with allusions to the Messiah's kingdom, the prophet Daniel,⁴ in limiting the time of his coming, directly affirms that the Messiah was to be cut off; and in the same manifest allusion, Zechariah uses these emphatic words: "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts: smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the

¹ Isaiah xxxv. 5, 6.

² Matt. ix. 33; xi. 5.

³ Psal. ii.; xxii. 1, 6, 7, 16, 18; xxxv. 7, 11, 12; lxix. 20, 21; cix. 2, 3, 5, 25; cxviii. 12.

⁴ Dan. ix. 26.

inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him.”¹

But Isaiah, who describes with eloquence worthy of a prophet, the glories of the kingdom that was to come, characterizes, with the accuracy of a historian, the humiliation, the trials, and the agonies which were to precede the triumphs of the Redeemer of a world; and the history of Christ forms, to the very letter, the commentary and the completion of his every prediction. In a single passage,²—the connection of which is uninterrupted, its antiquity indisputable, and its application obvious,—the sufferings of the servant of God (who, under the same denomination, is previously described as he who was to be the light of the Gentiles, the salvation of God to the ends of the earth, and the elect of God in whom his soul delighted,)³ are so minutely foretold that no illustration is requisite to show that they testify of Jesus. Of the multitude of parallel passages in the New Testament a few of the most obvious may be here subjoined to the prophecy.

He is despised and rejected of men. “He came unto his own, and his own received him not; he had not where to lay his head; they derided him.” *A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.* Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus; he mourned over Jerusalem; he felt the ingratitude and the cruelty of men; he bore the contradiction of sinners against himself: and these are expressions of sorrow which were peculiarly his own, “Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me; but for this end came I into the world. My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?” *We hid, as it were, our faces from him, he was despised, and we esteemed him not.* “All his disciples forsook him and

¹ Zech. xiii. 7; xii. 10.

² Isaiah lii. 13—15, and chap. liii.

³ Isaiah xlii. 1; xlix. 6.

fled. Not this man but Barabbas; now Barabbas was a robber. The soldiers mocked him, and bowed the knee before him in derision." The catalogue of his sufferings is continued in the words of the prophecy: *We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. He was wounded, he was oppressed, he was afflicted, he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter. He was taken away by distress and by judgment.* And to this general description is united the detail of minuter incidents, which fixes the fact of their application to Jesus. *He was cut off out of the land of the living.* He was crucified in the flower of his age. *He made his grave* (or his grave was appointed) *with the wicked, and with the rich in his death.* His grave was doubtless appointed with the wicked, or the two thieves with whom he was crucified, but Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man, went and begged the body of Jesus, and laid it in his own new tomb. *He was numbered with the transgressors.* Barabbas was preferred before him. He was crucified between two thieves; and the Jews said unto Pilate, "If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee." *His visage was so marred, more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men,*—without any direct allusion made to it, but in literal fulfilment of the prophecy—the bloody sweat, the traces of the crown of thorns, his having been spitted on, and smitten on the head, disfigured the face;—while the scourge, the nails in his hands and in his feet, and the spear that pierced his side, marred the form of Jesus more than that of the sons of men.

That this circumstantial and continuous description of the Messiah's sufferings might not admit of any ambiguity, the dignity of his person, the incredulity of the Jews, the innocence of the sufferer, the cause of his sufferings, and his consequent exaltation, are all particularly marked, and are equally applicable to the doctrine of the gospel. *He shall*

be exalted and extolled, and be very high. Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up as a tender plant, &c. The mean external condition of Christ is here assigned as the reason of the unbelief of the Jews, and it was the very reason which they themselves assigned. The prediction points out the procuring cause of his suffering. *He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.* “Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many.” *He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.* “His own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead unto sin, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes we are healed.” *All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.* “All flesh have sinned; ye were as sheep going astray, but ye are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.” *He hath done no violence; neither was there any deceit in his mouth; Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin.* “God made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin.”

The whole of this prophecy thus refers to the Messiah. It describes both his debasement and his dignity—his rejection by the Jews—his humility, his affliction, and his agony—his magnanimity and his charity—how his words were disbelieved—how his state was lowly—how his sorrow was severe—how he opened not his mouth but to make intercession for the transgressors. In diametrical opposition to every dispensation of Providence which is registered in the records of the Jews, it represents spotless innocence suffering by the appointment of Heaven, death as the issue of perfect obedience, his righteous servant as forsaken of God, and one who was perfectly immaculate, bearing the

chastisement of many guilty,—sprinkling many nations from their iniquity, by virtue of his sacrifice,—justifying many by his knowledge, and dividing a portion with the great, and the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death. This prophecy, therefore, simply as a prediction prior to the event, renders the very unbelief of the Jews an evidence against them, converts the scandal of the cross into an argument in favour of Christianity, and presents us with an epitome of the truth, a miniature of the gospel in some of its most striking features. The simple exposition of it sufficed at once for the conversion of the eunuch of Ethiopia; and, without the aid of an apostle, it can boast, in more modern times, of a nobler trophy of its truth, in a victory which it was mainly instrumental in obtaining and securing, over the strongly-riveted prejudices and long-tried infidelity of a man of genius and of rank, who was one of the most abandoned, insidious, and successful of the advocates of impurity, and of the enemies of the Christian faith.¹

Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, according to the Scriptures; and thus the apostle testifies: “Those things which God had showed by the mouth of all the prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.”

That the Jews still retain these prophecies, and are the means of preserving them, and communicating them throughout the world, while they bear so strongly against themselves, and testify so clearly of a Saviour that was first to suffer, and then to be exalted,—are facts as indubitable as they are unaccountable, and give a confirmation to the truth of Christianity, than which it is difficult to conceive any stronger. The prophecies, as we have seen, by a simple enumeration of a few of them that testify of the sufferings of the Messiah, need no forced interpretation, but apply, in the plainest,

¹ Burnet's *Life of the Earl of Rochester*, pp. 70. 71.

simplest, and most literal manner, to the history of the sufferings and of the death of Christ. In the testimony of the Jews to the existence of these prophecies long prior to the Christian era; in their remaining unaltered to this hour; in the accounts given by the evangelists, of the life and death of Christ; in the testimony of heathen authors,¹ which has been frequently quoted but never refuted; and in the arguments of the first opposers of Christianity, from the mean condition of its author, and the manner of his death; we have now greater evidence of the fulfilment of all these prophecies, than could have been conceived possible at so great a distance of time.

But the prophecies further present us with the character of the gospel as well as of its Author, and with a description of the extent of his kingdom as well as of his sufferings. It was prophesied that the Messiah was to reveal the will of God to man, and establish a new and perfect religion:—"I will raise them up a prophet,—and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him; and it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.—Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.—There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse;—he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing

¹ "Auctor nominis ejus Christus, Tiberio imperitante, per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio adfectus erat."—*Tacit. Annal.* lib. xv. cap. xliv.

of his ears ; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity.—I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes.—Incline your ear and come unto me ; hear, and your soul shall live ; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.—I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them ; and I will make with them a covenant of peace, and it shall be an everlasting covenant ; and I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them : one king shall be king to them all ; neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols. They shall have one shepherd. They shall also walk in my judgments, and my servant David shall be their prince for ever.—Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant ;—and this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel ; After those days, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people : and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord ; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord ; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”¹ A future and perfect revelation of the Divine will is thus explicitly foretold. That these promised blessings were to extend beyond the confines of Judea, is expressly and frequently predicted :—“ It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel : I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles,

¹ Deut. xviii. 18, 19. Isa. ix. 6, 7 ; xi. 1, 3, 4 ; xlii. 6 ; lv. 3, 4. Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 25 ; xxxvii. 22–26. Jer. xxxi. 31, 33, 34.

that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.”¹

While the prophecies which are descriptive of the glories of the reign of the Messiah refer to its universal extension, and to the final restoration of the Jews, they detail and define, at the same time, the nature and the blessings of the gospel; and no better description or definition could now be given of the doctrine of Christ, and of the conditions which he hath proposed for the acceptance of man, than those very prophecies which were delivered many hundreds of years before he appeared in the world. The gospel, as the name itself signifies, declares *glad tidings*. Christ himself invited those who were weary and heavy-laden to come unto him that they might find rest unto their souls. He was the messenger of peace. He came, as he professed, to offer a sacrifice for the sins of the world, and to reveal the will of God to man. He published the gospel of the grace of God. His word is still that of reconciliation, his law that of love; and all the duty he has prescribed tends to qualify man for spiritual and eternal felicity, for this is the sum and the object of it all. What more could have been given, and what less could have been required? In similar terms do the prophecies of old describe the new law that was to be revealed, and the advent of the Saviour that was to come:—“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee.—How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings of good; that publisheth salvation.”²—The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek: he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”³ Having read these words out of the law, in the synagogue,

¹ Isa. xlix. 6; lvi. 6-8.

² Zech. ix. 9; Isa. lii. 7.

³ Isa. lxi. 1, 2.

Jesus said, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled." He was a teacher of righteousness and of peace, and in him alone it could have been fulfilled. The same character of joy, indicative of the kingdom of the Messiah, is also given by different prophets. He was to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity; to sprinkle clean water upon the people of God, to sprinkle many nations, to save them from their uncleanness, and to open a fountain for sin and for uncleanness. "Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him. I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more." The Messiah was to be anointed to comfort all that mourn, to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.¹ And in the gospel of peace these promised blessings are realized to all who believe, and to whom *he is precious*. We now see what many prophets and wise men did desire in vain to see. The Christian religion has indeed been sadly perverted and corrupted, and its corruptions are the subjects of prophecy. Bigotry has often tarnished and obscured all its benignity. Its lovely form has been shrouded in a mask of superstition, of tyranny, and of murder. But the religion of Jesus, pure from the lips of its author and the pen of his apostles, is calculated to diffuse universal happiness; tends effectually to promote the moral culture and the civilization of humanity; ameliorates the condition and perfects the nature of man. It is a doctrine of righteousness, a perfect rule of duty: it abolishes idolatry, and teaches all to worship God only: it is full of promises to all who obey it: it reveals the method of reconciliation for iniquity, and imparts the means to obtain it: it

¹ Dan. ix. 24. Isa. lv. 7. Jer. xxxi. 34. Isa. lxi. 2, 3.

is good tidings to the meek: it binds up the broken-hearted, and presents to us the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, or the most perfect system of consolation, under all the evils of life, that can be conceived by man. For the confirmation of all these prophecies concerning it, we stand not in need of Jewish testimony, or that of the primitive Christians, or of any testimony whatever. It is a matter of experience and of fact. The doctrine of the gospel is in complete accordance with the predictions respecting it. When we compare it with any impure, degrading, vicious, and cruel system of religion that existed in the world when these prophecies were delivered, its superiority must be apparent, and its unrivalled excellence must be acknowledged. Deities were then worshipped whose vices disgraced human nature; and even impiety could not institute a comparison between them and the God of Christians. Idolatry was universally prevalent, and men knew not a higher homage than bowing down in adoration to stocks and stones, and sometimes even to the beasts. Sacrifices were everywhere offered up, and human victims often bled, when the doctrine of reconciliation for iniquity was unknown. And we have only to look beyond the boundaries of Christianity,—to Ashantee, or to India, or to China,—to behold the most revolting of spectacles in the religious rites and practices of man. Regarding the superiority of the Christian religion only as a subject of prophecy, the assent can hardly be withheld, that the prophecies concerning its excellence, and the blessings which it imparts, have been amply verified by the peace-speaking gospel of Jesus.

But, in ascertaining the accomplishment of ancient predictions, in evidence of the truth, the unbeliever is not solicited to relinquish one iota of his scepticism in any matter that can possibly admit of a reasonable doubt. For

there are many prophecies, of the truth of which every Christian is a witness, and to the fulfilment of which the testimony even of infidels must be borne. That the gospel emanated from Jerusalem; that it was rejected by a great proportion of the Jews; that it was opposed at first by human power; that pagan idolatry was overthrown before it; that it has already continued for many ages, and that it has been propagated throughout many countries, are facts clearly foretold and literally fulfilled. “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of *Jerusalem*; behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just and having salvation; lowly and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from *Jerusalem*, and the battle bow shall be cut off, and *he shall speak peace unto the heathen*, and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth.¹ He shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence, to both the houses of Israel; for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.—The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his Anointed.”² In like manner, Christ frequently foretold the persecution that awaited his followers, and the final success of the gospel, in defiance of all opposition.³ “The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day, and the idols he shall utterly abolish;—from all your idols will I cleanse you;—I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered.”⁴ To a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship.—The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.⁵ The Gentiles shall see thy righteousness:—

¹ Zech. ix. 9, 10.

² Isa. viii. 14. Psalm ii. 2.

³ Matt. x. 17; xvi. 18; xxiv. 14; xxviii. 19.

⁴ Isa. ii. 17, 18; Ezek. xxxvi. 25; Zech. xiii. 2.

⁵ Isa. xlix. 7; lx. 3.

I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name. In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek. I will make an everlasting covenant with you. Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not; and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee.”¹

At the time the prophecies were delivered, there was not a vestige in the world of that spiritual kingdom and pure religion which they unequivocally represent as destined to extend in succeeding ages, not only throughout the narrow bounds of the land of Judea, and those countries which alone the prophets knew, but over the Gentile nations also, even to the uttermost ends of the earth. None are now ignorant of the facts, that a system of religion which inculcates piety, and purity, and love,—which releases man from every burdensome rite, and every barbarous institution, and proffers the greatest of blessings,—arose from the land of Judea, from among a people who are proverbially the most selfish and worldly-minded of any nation upon earth;—that, though persecuted at first, and rejected by the Jews, it has spread throughout many nations, and extended to those who were far distant from the scene of its origin; and that it freely invites all to partake of its privileges, and makes no distinction between barbarian, Scythian, bond or free. A Latin poet, who lived at the commencement of the Christian era, speaks of the barbarous Britons as almost divided from the whole world; and yet although far more distant from the land of Judea than from Rome, the law which hath come out from Jerusalem hath taken, by its influence, the name of barbarous from Britain; and in our distant “isle of the Gentiles” are the prophecies fulfilled, that the kingdom of the Messiah, or the knowledge of the gospel, would extend to the uttermost part of the earth. And in the present day,

¹ Isa. lxii. 2; lxxv. 1; xi. 10; lv. 3, 5.

we can look from one distant isle of the Gentiles to another,—from the northern to the southern ocean, or from one extremity of the globe to another,—and behold the extinction of idolatry, and the abolition of every barbarous and cruel rite, by the humanizing influence of the gospel. But it was at a time when no divine light dawned upon the world, save obscurely on the land of Judea alone; when all the surrounding nations, in respect to religious knowledge, were involved in thick darkness, gross superstition, and blind idolatry; when men made unto themselves gods of corruptible things; when those mortals were deified, after their death, who had been subject to the greatest vices, and who had been the oppressors of their fellow-men; when the most shocking rites were practised as acts of religion; when the most enlightened among the nations of the earth erected an altar to the “unknown God,” and set no limit to the number of their deities; when one of the greatest of the heathen philosophers, and the best of their moralists, despairing of the clear discovery of the truth by human means, could merely express a wish for a divine revelation, as the only safe and certain guide;¹ when slaves were far more numerous than freemen even where liberty prevailed the most; and when there was no earthly hope of redemption from temporal bondage or spiritual slavery;—even at such a time the voice of prophecy was uplifted in the land of Judea, and it spoke of a brighter day that was to dawn upon the world. It was indeed a light shining in a dark place. And from whence could that light have emanated but from heaven? A Messiah was promised, a prince of peace was to appear, a stone was to be cut without hands, that should break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms. And the spiritual reign of a Saviour is foretold in terms that define its duration and extent, as well as describe its nature:—“I shall

¹ Plato in *Phædone* et in *Alcibiade* ii.

see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh.—His name shall endure for ever; his name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed. He shall have dominion from sea to sea; and from the river unto the ends of the earth. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.¹ I will give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. The glory of the Lord shall be revealed; and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.² The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law.³ He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations.⁴ I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name.”⁵ “It shall come to pass, in the last days,” say both Isaiah and Micah in the same words, “that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it.”⁶ In the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God.⁷ The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.⁸ Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry

¹ Numb. xxiv. 17; Psal. lxxii. 17; ii. 8; xxii. 27.

² Isa. xlix. 6; xl. 5.

³ Isa. lii. 10; xlii. 4.

⁴ Isa. xxv. 7.

⁵ Isa. lxv. 1.

⁶ Isa. ii. 2; Micah iv. 1.

⁷ Hosea i. 10.

⁸ Isa. lx. 5.

aloud—for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords—for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left, and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles: for thy Maker is thine husband: the Lord of hosts is his name—the God of the whole earth shall he be called.¹ The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.”²

These prophecies all refer to the extent of the Messiah's kingdom; and clear and copious though they be, they form but a small number of the predictions of the same auspicious import:—and we have not merely to consider what part of them may yet remain to be fulfilled, but how much has already been accomplished, of which no surmise could have been formed, and of which all the wisdom of short-sighted mortals could not have warranted a thought. All of them were delivered many ages before the existence of that religion whose progress they minutely describe; and, when we compare the present state of any country where the gospel is professed in its purity, with its state at that period when the Sun of righteousness began to arise upon it, we see light pervading the region of darkness, and ignorance and barbarism yielding to knowledge and moral cultivation. In opposition to all human probability, and to human wisdom and power, the gospel of Jesus, propagated at first by a few fishermen of Galilee, has razed every heathen temple from its foundation, has overthrown before it every impure altar, has displaced, from every palace and every cottage which it has reached, the worship of every false god; the whole civilized world acknowledges its authority; it has prevailed from the first to the last in defiance of persecution, of opposition the most powerful and violent, of the direct attacks of avowed,

¹ Isa. liv. 1–3, 5.

² Isa. xxxv. 1.

and the insidious designs of disguised enemies;—and combating, as it ever has been combating, with all the evil passions of men that impel them to resist or pervert it, the lapse of eighteen centuries confirms every ancient prediction, and verifies to this hour the declaration of its Author,—“the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” How is it possible that it could have been conceived that such a religion would have been characterized in all its parts—would have been instituted—opposed—established—propagated throughout the world—adopted even professedly by so many nations—and avowedly received as the rule of faith and the will of God? How could all these things, and many more respecting it, have been foretold, as they unquestionably were, many centuries before the Author of Christianity appeared, if these prophecies be not an attestation from on high that every prediction and its completion is the work of God and not of man? What uninspired mortal could have described the nature, the effect, the progress, and final triumph of the Christian religion, when none could have entertained an idea of its existence? For paganism consisted in external rites and cruel sacrifices, and in pretended mysteries. Its toleration, indeed, has been commended, and not undeservedly; for in religion, it tolerated whatever was absurd and impious, in morals it tolerated all that was impure and almost all that was vicious. But the Jewish prophets, when the world was in darkness, and could supply no light to lead them to such knowledge, predicted the rise of a religion which could boast of no *such* toleration, but which was to reveal the will and inculcate the worship of the one living and true God; which was to consist in moral obedience, to enjoin reformation of life and purity of heart, to abolish all sacrifice by revealing a better means of reconciliation for iniquity, to be understood by all from the simplicity of its precepts, and to tolerate no manner of evil;

a religion in every respect the reverse of paganism, and of which they could not have been furnished with any semblance upon earth. They saw nothing among the surrounding nations but the worship of a multiplicity of deities and of idols; if they had traversed the whole world they would have witnessed only the same spiritual degradation, and yet they predicted the final abolition and extinction both of polytheism and of idolatry. The Jewish dispensation was local, and Jews prophesied of a religion beginning from Jerusalem, which was to extend to the uttermost parts of the earth. So utterly unlikely and incredible were the prophecies either to have been foretold by human wisdom, or to have been fulfilled by human power; and when both these wonders are united, they convey an assurance of the truth. As a matter of history, the progress of Christianity is at least astonishing; as the fulfilment of many prophecies, it is evidently miraculous.¹

The predicted success and extension of the gospel is not less obvious in the New Testament than in the Old. A single instance may suffice:—"I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell upon the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." These are the words of a banished man, secluded in a small island from which he could not remove; a believer in a new religion every where spoken against and persecuted. They were uttered at a time when their truth could not possibly have been realized to the degree in which it actually is at present, even if all

¹ Were it even to be conceded, as it never will in reason be, that the causes assigned by Gibbon for the rapid extension of Christianity were *adequate* and true, one difficulty, great as it is, would only be removed for the substitution of a greater. For what human ingenuity, though gifted with the utmost reach of discrimination, can ever attempt the solution of the question, how were all these occult causes, (for hidden they must then have been,) which the genius of Gibbon first discovered, foreseen, their combination known, and all their wonderful effects distinctly described for many centuries prior to their existence, or to the commencement of the period of their alleged operation?

human power had been combined for extending, instead of extinguishing the gospel. The diffusion of knowledge was then extremely difficult; the art of printing was then unknown; and many countries which the gospel has now reached, were then undiscovered. And, multiplied as books now are, more than at any former period of the history of man,—extensive as the range of commerce is, beyond what Tyre, or Carthage, or Rome could have ever boasted,—the dissemination of the Scriptures surpasses both the one and the other:—they have penetrated regions unknown to any work of human genius, and untouched even by the ardour of commercial speculation; and, with the prescription of more than seventeen centuries in its favour, the prophecy of the poor prisoner of Patmos is now exemplified, and thus proved to be more than a mortal vision, in the unexampled communication of the everlasting gospel unto them that dwell on the earth, to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. Christianity is professed over Europe and America. Christians are settled throughout every part of the earth. The gospel is now translated into one hundred and fifty languages and dialects, which are prevalent in countries from the one extremity of the world to the other: and what other book, since the creation, has ever been read or known in a fifth part of the number? Whatever may be the secondary causes by which these events have been accomplished, or whatever may be the opinion of men respecting them, the predictions which they amply verify must have originated by inspiration from him who is the great First Cause. What divine warrant, equal to this alone, can all the speculations of infidelity supply, or can any freethinker produce, for disbelieving the gospel?

It is apparent, on a general view of the prophecies which refer to Christ and the Christian religion, that they include predictions relative to many of the doctrines of the gospel

which are subjects of pure revelation, or which reason of itself could never have discovered ; and these very doctrines, to which the self-sufficiency of human wisdom is often averse to yield assent, are thus to be numbered, in this respect, among the criterions of the truth of divine revelation ; for if these doctrines had not been contained in Scripture, the prophecies respecting them could not have been fulfilled. And the more wonderful they appear, they were by so much the more unlikely or inconceivable to have been foretold by man, and to have been afterwards embodied in a system of religion.

It is also evident that there are many prophecies applicable to Jesus, to which no allusion is made in the history of his life. The minds of his disciples were long impressed with the prejudices, arising from the lowliness of his mortal state, which were prevalent among the Jews ; and they viewed the prophecies through the mist of those traditions which had magnified the earthly power to which alone they looked, and obscured the divine nature of the expected reign of the Messiah. It was only after the resurrection of Christ, as the Scriptures inform us, that their understandings were opened to know the prophecies. But while the accomplishment of many of these predictions is thus unnoticed in the New Testament, the fulfilment of each and all of them is written, as with a pen of iron, in the life and doctrine and death of Jesus ;—and the undesigned and unsuspecting proof, thus indirectly but amply given, is now stronger than if an appeal had been made to the prophecies in every instance ;—and, freed from the prejudices of the Jews, we may now combine and compare all the antecedent prophecies respecting the Messiah with the narrative of the New Testament, and with the nature and history of Christianity ; and having seen how the former, in all that has already been fulfilled, is a transcript of the latter, we may draw the legiti-

mate conclusion, that the spirit of prophecy is indeed the testimony of Jesus.

And may it not, on a review of the whole, be warrantably asserted, that the time and the place of the birth of Christ, the tribe and the family from which he was descended, the manner of his life, his character, his miracles, his sufferings and his death, the nature of his doctrine, and the fate of his religion,—that it was to proceed from Jerusalem, that the Jews would reject it, that it would be opposed and persecuted at first, that it would be extended to the Gentiles, that idolatry would give way before it, that kings would submit to its authority, and that it would be spread throughout many nations, even to the most distant parts of the earth,—were all of them subjects of ancient prophecy?

Why, then, were so many prophecies delivered? Why, from the calling of Abraham to the present time, have the Jews been separated, as a peculiar people, from all the nations of the earth? Why, from the age of Moses to that of Malachi, during the space of one thousand years, did a succession of prophets arise, all testifying of a Saviour that was to come? Why was the book of prophecy sealed for nearly four hundred years before the coming of Christ? Why is there still, to this day, undisputed if not miraculous evidence of the antiquity of all these prophecies, by their being sacredly preserved in every age, in the custody and guardianship of the enemies of Christianity? Why was such a multiplicity of facts predicted that are applicable to Christ and to him alone? Why, but that all this mighty preparation might usher in the gospel of Righteousness; and that, like all the works of the Almighty, his word through Jesus Christ might never be left without a witness of his wisdom and his power. And if the prophecies which testify of the gospel and of its Author display, from the slight glance

which has here been given of them, any traces of the finger of God, how strong must be the conviction which a full view of them imparts to the minds of those who diligently search the Scriptures, and see how clearly they testify of Christ !

CHAPTER III.

PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

THE commonwealth of Israel, from its establishment to its dissolution, subsisted for more than fifteen hundred years. In delivering their law, Moses assumed more than the authority of a human legislator, and asserted that he was invested with a divine commission; and in enjoining obedience to it, after having conducted them to the borders of Canaan, he promises many blessings to accompany their compliance with the law, and denounces grievous judgments that would overtake them for the breach of it. The history of the Jews in each succeeding age, attests the truth of the last prophetic warning of the first of their rulers; but too lengthened a detail would be requisite for its elucidation. Happily, it contains predictions, applicable to more recent events, which admit not of any ambiguous interpretation, and refer to historical facts that admit no cavil. He who founded their government, foretold, notwithstanding the intervention of so many ages, the manner of its overthrow. While they were wandering in the wilderness, without a city, and without a home, he threatened them with the destruction of their cities, and the devastation of their country. While they viewed, for the first time, the land of Palestine, and when victorious and triumphant they were about to possess it, he represented the scene of desolation that it would exhibit to their vanquished and enslaved posterity, on their last departure from it. Ere they themselves had entered it as enemies, he describes those enemies by whom their descendants were to be subjugated and dispossessed,

though they were to arise from a very distant region, and although they did not appear till after a millenary and a half of years: "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favour to the young. And he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed: which also shall not leave thee either corn, wine, or oil, or the increase of thy kine, or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee; and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land."¹ Each particular of this prophecy, though it be only introductory to others, has met its full completion. The remote situation of the Romans, the rapidity of their march, the very emblem of their arms, their unknown language and warlike appearance, the indiscriminate cruelty and unsparing pillage which they exercised towards the persons and the property of the Jews, could scarcely have been represented in more descriptive terms.² Vespasian, Adrian, and Julius Severus, removed with part of their armies from Britain to Palestine, the extreme points of the Roman world. The eagle was the standard of their armies, and the utmost activity and expedition were displayed in the reduction of Judea. They were a nation of fierce countenance, a race distinct from the effeminate Asiatic troops. At Gadara and Gamala, throughout many parts of the Roman empire, and, in repeated instances, at Jerusalem itself, the slaughter of the Jews was indiscriminate, without distinction of age or sex. The inhabitants were enslaved and banished, all their possessions confiscated, and the king-

¹ Deut. xxviii. 49-52.

² See Jackson, Poole, Patrick, Whiston, Bishop Newton, &c.

dom of Israel, humbled at first into a province of the Roman empire, became at last the private property of the emperor. Throughout all the land of Judea every city was besieged and taken; and their high and fenced walls were razed from the foundation. But the prophet particularizes incidents the most shocking to humanity, which mark the utmost possible extremity of want and wretchedness; the last act to which famine could prompt despair, and the last subject of a prediction that could have been uttered by man: "And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters,—in the siege and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee; so that the man that is tender among you, and very delicate, his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the remnant of his children whom he shall leave, so that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children, whom he shall eat, because he hath nothing left him in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates. The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter, and toward her young one, and toward her children which she shall bear: for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly in the siege and straitness wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates."¹ No commentator, nor careful reader of Scripture and of Jewish history, could fail to observe the repeated instances of the fulfilment of this striking and awful prediction. When Samaria, then the capital of Israel, was besieged by all the hosts of the king of Syria, an ass's head was sold for eighty pieces of silver.² When Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, the

¹ Deut. xxviii. 53-57.

² 2 Kings vi. 25.

famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land. And Josephus, in his history of the Jewish war, relates the direful calamities of the Jews in their last siege, before they ceased to have a city. The famine was too powerful for all other passions, for what was otherwise revered was in this case despised. Children snatched the food out of the very mouths of their fathers; and even mothers, overcoming the tenderest feelings of nature, took from their perishing infants the last morsels that could sustain their lives.—In every house where there was the least shadow of food, a contest arose; and the nearest relatives struggled with each other for the miserable means of subsistence.¹ He adds a most revolting detail.² While, in all these cases, the eye of man was thus evil towards his brother, in the siege and in the straitness wherewith their enemies distressed them—the unparalleled inhuman compact between the two women of Samaria; the bitter lamentation of Jeremiah over the miseries of the siege which he witnessed, “The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children: they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people;” and the harrowing recital, by Josephus, of the noble lady killing, with her own hands, and eating secretly, her own suckling (the discovery of which struck even the whole suffering city with horror,) which are all recorded as facts, without the least allusion to the prediction,—too faithfully realize, to the very letter, the dread denunciations of the prophet. When any well-authenticated facts, of so singular and appalling a nature, were predicted for ages, they could not possibly have been revealed but by inspiration from that Omniscience which alone can foresee the termination of the iniquities of nations.

¹ Joseph. Hist. lib. v. c. x. § 3.—lib. vi. c. iii. § 3. Quoted by Eusebius, A.D. 315. Ecc. Hist. lib. iii. c. vi. p. 95, 97. Patrick, &c.

² Joseph. *ibid.* vi. c. iii. § 4.

Moses, and the other prophets, foretold also that the Jews would be left few in number, that they would be slain before their enemies, that the pride of their power would be broken, that their cities would be laid waste, that they would be destroyed and brought to nought, plucked from off the land, sold for slaves, and that none would buy them,—that their high places were to be desolate, and their bones to be scattered around their altars,—that Jerusalem was to be encamped round about, to be besieged with a mount, to have forts raised against it, to be ploughed over as a field, and to become heaps,—that the end was to come upon it; and that the Lord would judge them according to their ways, and recompense them for all their abominations; the sword without, and the pestilence and the famine within: “he that is in the field shall die with the sword; and he that is in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him.”¹

These predictions, which are recorded in the Pentateuch, and in the subsequent prophecies, accord with the minute prophetic narrative which Jesus gave of the siege and destruction of Jerusalem. Any adequate delineation of it alone would far surpass the limits of this treatise. But *the subject has been fully and frequently illustrated*, and the prediction harmonizes so completely with the unimpeachable testimony of impartial historians, that it is merely necessary, for the elucidation of its truth, to compare the prophetic description with the historical fact.²

¹ Lev. xxvi. 30, &c. Deut. xxviii. 62, &c. Isa. xxiv. 3. Ezek. vi. 5. Micah iii. 12. Jer. xxvi. 18. Ezek. vii. 7–9, 15.

² “The particular parts of the whole discourse have been admirably illustrated by many learned commentators. Christian writers have *always*, with great reason, represented Josephus’s History of the Jewish War, as the best commentary on this chapter, (Matt. xxiv.) and many have justly remarked it, as a wonderful instance of the care of Providence for the Christian Church, that he, an eye-witness of these things, and of so great credit, should (especially in such an extraordinary manner) be preserved, to transmit to us a collection of important facts, which *so exactly* illustrate this noble prophecy in almost every circumstance.”—(*Doddridge’s Family Expositor*, vol. ii. p. 373; second edition, 1745.) No author, perhaps, has been more frequently quoted on any subject than Josephus on this; his History of the Wars of

Besides frequent allusions, in his discourses and parables,¹ the predictions of Christ, concerning Jerusalem, are recorded at length by three of the evangelists. They are omitted by the apostle John; in whose writings alone, from the age to which he lived, their insertion could have been suspicious. They were delivered to the disciples of Christ in answer to those direct questions which they put, in their surprise and alarm, at his declaration of the fate of the temple, "When shall these things be? What shall be the sign of them, and of the end of the world?" The reply embraces all the subjects of the query, and is equally circumstantial and distinct. The death of Christ happened thirty-seven years previous to the destruction of Jerusalem. By the unanimous testimony of antiquity, the three gospels were published, and at least two of the evangelists were dead, several years before that event. Copies of the gospels were disseminated so extensively and rapidly, that any deceit must have been instantaneously detected by the powerful, and numerous, and watchful enemies of the cross. And the evidence of the prior publicity of the gospels was so strong, that it remained

the Romans with the Jews having been for many ages the common property of the Christian Church, in illustration of the prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem. These prophecies were quoted and illustrated by Eusebius above 1500 years ago, lib. iv. c. v.—ix. p. 92—102, edit. Cantab. 1720. After giving a tragic summary, from the 5th and 6th books of Josephus's history, of the miseries sustained from famine during the siege, he emphatically and justly states, that if any one compares the words of Christ with Josephus's narrative of the whole war, he cannot but admire the wonderful prescience and prophecy of Christ, and confess they were truly divine and exceedingly wonderful. *So fully and frequently has the subject been illustrated*, as stated in every edition of this treatise, that any 'studious Christian,' at all versant in the subject, could be at no loss to form, from the works of various writers in past ages, a volume of coincident illustrations of the same predictions from the same authorities. It may here suffice to mention the names of Eusebius, Grotius, Tillemont, Jackson, Poole, Patrick, Tillotson, Whitby, Abbadie, Whiston, Doddridge, Pearce, Bishop Newton, Lardner, &c., the last of whom, in a single treatise, has 250 references to Josephus alone. Josephus, Tacitus, Suetonius, and Eusebius, are quoted or referred to in a single paragraph by Doddridge, as well as by many preceding writers; and in this brief and most imperfect summary, these authorities were consulted from the first.

¹ Matt. xxi. 18, 19, 33—44; xxii. 1—7; xxv. 14—30. Mark xi. 12—20, &c. Luke xiii. 6—9; xiv. 16—24; xx. 9—18; xxiii. 27—31.

unchallenged by Julian, Porphyry, or by Celsus. The authenticity of the prophecy thus rests on sure grounds, and the facts in which it received its accomplishment are incontestable. Josephus was one of the most distinguished generals in the commencement of the Jewish war; he was an eye-witness of the facts which he records; he appeals to Vespasian and to Titus for the truth of his history; it received the singular attestation of the subscription of the latter to its accuracy; it was published while the facts were recent and notorious; and the extreme carefulness with which he avoids the mention of the name of Christ, in the history of the Jewish war, is not less remarkable than the great precision with which he describes the events that verify his predictions. Not a few of the transactions are also related by Tacitus, Suetonius, Philostratus, and Dion Cassius.

The different prophecies of Christ respecting Jerusalem may be condensed into a single view.

“And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple; and his disciples came to him, for to show him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down. And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall all these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world (the age)? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you; for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And the time draws near; and ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars,—or commotions: these things must first come to pass, but the end is not yet. Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences, and fearful sights; and great signs

shall there be from heaven. All these things are the beginning of sorrows. But, before all these things, shall they lay their hands upon you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. And many shall be offended. Ye shall be betrayed both by parents and brethren, and kinsfolk and friends: and some of you shall they cause to be put to death, and ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. But there shall not a hair of your head perish. And many false prophets will arise and will deceive many: and because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. When ye, therefore, shall see Jerusalem encompassed with armies, and the abomination of desolation stand in the holy place, and where it ought not, then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let him which is in the midst of the city depart out. Let him which is on the house-top not go down into the house, neither enter therein to take anything out of his house. Neither let him that is in the field turn back again for to take up his garment, for these are the days of vengeance. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days; for there will be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people; and they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led captive into all nations. And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.¹

“Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees; fill ye up the measure of your fathers. Behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill, and crucify, and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city. All these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them

¹ Matt. xxiv. Mark xiii. Luke xxi.

which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not ! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.¹

“ When he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace ! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee ; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another, because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.”²

These prophecies, from the Old Testament and from the New, repel the charge of ambiguity. They are equally copious and clear. History attests the truth of each and all of them ; and a recapitulation of them forms an enumeration of the facts. *False Christs appeared.* Simon Magus boasted that he was some great one. Dositheus, the Samaritan, pretended that he was the lawgiver prophesied of by Moses. Theudas, promising the performance of a miracle, persuaded a great multitude to follow him to Jordan, and deceived many.³ The country was filled with impostors and deceivers, who induced the people to follow them into the wilderness ;⁴—their credulity became the punishment of their previous scepticism, and, in one instance, the tumult was so great that the soldiers took two hundred prisoners, and slew twice that number. *There were wars and rumours of wars ; nation rose against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.*

¹ Matt. xxiii. 29, 32, 34, 36–39.

² Luke xix. 41–44.

³ Joseph. Ant. lib. xx. cap. v. sect. 1. Quoted by Grotius, Whitby, &c.

⁴ Ibid. lib. xx. cap. viii. quoted by Grotius, &c.

The Jews resisted the erection of the statue of Caligula in the temple; and such was the dread of Roman resentment, that the fields remained uncultivated. At Cæsarea, the Jews and the Syrians contended for the mastery of the city. Twenty thousand of the former were put to death, and the rest were expelled. Every city in Syria was then divided into two armies, and multitudes were slaughtered.¹ Alexandria and Damascus presented a similar scene of bloodshed. About fifty thousand of the Jews fell in the former, and ten thousand in the latter.² The Jewish nation rebelled against the Romans; Italy was convulsed with contentions for the empire; and, as a proof of the troubles and warlike character of the period, within the brief space of two years, four emperors, Nero, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, suffered death. *There were famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places.* In the reign of Claudius Cæsar there were different famines. They continued to be severe for several years throughout the land of Judea. Pestilence succeeded them. In the same reign there were earthquakes at Rome, at Apamea, and at Crete. In that of Nero there was an earthquake in Campania, and another in which Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colosse were overthrown, and others are recorded to have happened in various places, before the destruction of the city of Jerusalem.³ “The constitution of nature,” says the Jewish historian,⁴ “was confounded for the destruction of men, and one might easily conjecture that no common calamities were portended.” *And there were fearful sights and signs from heaven.* Tacitus and Josephus agree in relating and describing events so surprising and supernatural, that their narrative perfectly

¹ Joseph. Hist. lib. ii. cap. xviii. sects. 1, 2. Tillotson, Bishop Newton, &c.

² Ibid. lib. ii. c. xvii. sects. 7, 8, c. xx. sect. 2, Ibid.

³ Suet. Vit. Claud. cap. xviii. Tac. Ann. lib. xii. c. xliii.; lib. xiv. c. xxvii. Jos. lib. iv. c. iv. Grotius, Whitby, &c.

⁴ Jos. ibid. Whitby, Newton, Scott's Commentary.

accords with the previous prediction.¹ And the fact cannot be disputed, that, whatever these sights were, the minds of men were impressed with the idea that they were indeed signs from heaven: and even this could never have been foreseen by man. There is surely something at least unaccountable in their prediction, and in their relation by historians, unprejudiced and unfriendly to the cause which their testimony supports. *The disciples of Jesus were persecuted, imprisoned, afflicted, and hated of all nations, for his name's sake, and many of them were put to death.* Peter, Simon, and Jude were crucified;² Paul was beheaded; Matthew, Thomas, James, Matthias, Mark, and Luke, were put to death in different countries, and in various manners. There was a war against the very name. They were accused of hatred to the human race. The prejudices and the interests of the supporters of paganism were everywhere against them; and in one memorable instance, Nero, to screen himself from the guilt of being the incendiary of his capital, accused the innocent but hated Christians of that atrocious deed, and inflicted upon them the most excruciating tortures.³ He made their sufferings a spectacle and a sport to the Romans. To compensate for his disappointment in not trampling on the ashes of Rome, as well as to cloak his iniquity, the monster (for the man and the monarch were both laid aside) gratified his savage lust of cruelty, by the substitution of one feast for another; he selected the Christians for his victims, from the general odium under which they lay; and their very name became the warrant for that selection, and sufficed to sanction the infliction of

¹ "Evenerant prodigia, quæ neque hostiis neque votis piare fas habet gens superstitioni obnoxia, religionibus adversa. Visæ per cælum concurrere acies, rutilantia arma, et subito nubium igne collucere templum. Expassæ repente delubri fores, et audita major humana vox, *excedere deos*; simul ingens motus excedentium." (Tacit. Hist. lib. v. cap. xiii.) Whitby, &c.

² Cave's Lives of the Apostles. Dupin.

³ Tacit. Annal. lib. xv. cap. xliv. Whitby, &c.

unheard-of barbarities. *Many shall be offended and shall betray one another; and the love of many shall wax cold.* The apostle of the Gentiles often complained of false brethren, that many turned away from him, and that he stood alone, forsaken by all, when he first appeared before Nero. And Tacitus testifies that very many were convicted, on the evidence of others who had previously been accused. *Jerusalem was encompassed with armies.* The Roman armies, with their idolatrous ensigns, which were an abomination to the Jews, surrounded it; but instead of being a signal for flight, this would naturally have implied the impossibility of escape, and the warning would have been in vain. Yet the words of Jesus did not deceive his disciples. Cestius Gallus, the Roman general, besieged Jerusalem; but immediately after, contrary to all human probability, an interval was given for escape. He suddenly and causelessly retreated, though some of the chief men of the city had offered to open to him the gates. Josephus acknowledges that the utmost consternation prevailed among the besieged, and that the city would infallibly have been taken.¹ And he attributes it to the just vengeance of God, that the city and the sanctuary were not then taken, and the war terminated at once. He relates also, how many of the most illustrious inhabitants departed from the city, as from a sinking vessel; and how, upon the approach of Vespasian afterwards, multitudes fled from Jericho into the mountainous country. Thither, and to the city of Pella, fled all the disciples of Jesus:² and, amidst all the succeeding calamities, *not a hair of their heads did perish.*

There shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. These are the days of vengeance. Such are some of the words of Jesus, relative to the destruction

¹ Joseph. lib. ii. cap. xix. xx. Grotius, &c. &c.

² Epiphanius in Hæres. Nazar. cap. vii. Eusebii Ec. Hist. lib. iii. cap. v. Whitby, Doddridge, &c.

of Jerusalem; and all the previous prophecies regarding it were of the same sad import. The particulars of the siege are all related by Josephus, and form a detail of miseries that admit not of exaggeration; and which he repeatedly declares, in terms that entirely accord with the language of prophecy, are altogether unequalled in the history of the world.—No general description can give a just idea of calamities the most terrible that ever nation suffered. The Jews had assembled in their city from all the surrounding country, to keep the feast of unleavened bread. It was crowded with inhabitants when they were all imprisoned within its walls. The passover, which was commemorative of their first great deliverance, had collected them for their last signal destruction. Before any external enemy appeared, the fiercest dissensions prevailed; the blood of thousands was shed by their brethren; they destroyed and burned in their frenzy their common provisions for the siege; they were destitute of any regular government, and divided into three factions. On the extirpation of one of these, each of the others contended for the mastery. The most ferocious and fanatic, the robbers or zealots, as they are indiscriminately called, prevailed at last. They entered the temple, under the pretence of offering sacrifices, and carried concealed weapons for the purpose of assassination. They slew the priests at the very altar; and their blood, instead of that of the victims for sacrifice, flowed around it. They afterwards rejected all terms of peace with the enemy; none were suffered to escape from the city; every house was entered, every article of subsistence was pillaged, and the most wanton barbarities were committed. Nothing could restrain their fury; wherever there was the appearance or scent of food, the human bloodhounds tracked it out; and though a general famine raged around, though they were ever trampling on the dead, and though the habitations for the

living were converted into charnel houses, nothing could intimidate, or appal, or satisfy, or shock them, till Mary, the daughter of Eleazar, a lady once rich and noble, displayed to them and offered them all her remaining food, the scent of which had attracted them in their search,—the bitterest morsel that ever mother or mortal tasted,—the remnant of her half-eaten suckling. Sixty thousand Roman soldiers unremittingly besieged them; they encompassed Jerusalem with a wall, and hemmed them in on every side; they brought down their high and fenced walls to the ground; they slaughtered the slaughterers, they spared not the people; they burned the temple in defiance of the commands, the threats, and the resistance of their general. With it the last hope of the Jews was extinguished. They raised, at the sight, a universal but an expiring cry of sorrow and despair. Ten thousand were there slain, and six thousand victims were enveloped in its blaze. The whole city, full of the famished dying, and of the murdered dead, presented no picture but that of despair, no scene but of horror. The aqueducts and the city sewers were crowded as the last refuge of the hopeless. Two thousand were found dead there, and many were dragged from thence and slain. The Roman soldiers put all indiscriminately to death, and ceased not till they became faint and weary and overpowered with the work of destruction. But they only sheathed the sword to light the torch. They set fire to the city in various places. The flames spread everywhere, and were checked but for a moment by the red streamlets in every street. Jerusalem became heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest. Within the circuit of a few miles, in the space of five months,—foes and famine, pillage and pestilence within,—a triple wall around and besieged every moment from without,—eleven hundred thousand human beings perished,

though the tale of each of them was a tragedy. Was there ever so concentrated a mass of misery? Could any prophecy be more faithfully and awfully fulfilled? The prospect of his own crucifixion, when Jesus was on his way to Calvary, was not more clearly before him, and seemed to affect him less, than the fate of Jerusalem. How full of tenderness, and fraught with truth, was the sympathetic response of the condoling sufferer, to the wailings and lamentations of the women who followed him, when he turned unto them and beheld the city, which some of them might yet see wrapt in flames and drenched in blood, and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" No impostor ever betrayed such feelings as a man, or predicted events so unlikely, astonishing, and true, as an attestation of a divine commission. Jesus revealed the very judgments of God; for such the instrument, by whom it was accomplished, interpreted the capture and destruction of Jerusalem, acknowledging that his own power would otherwise have been ineffectual. When eulogized for the victory, Titus disclaimed the praise, affirming that he was only the instrument of executing the sentence of Divine justice. And their own historian asserts, in conformity with every declaration of Scripture upon the subject, that the iniquities of the Jews were as unparalleled as their punishment.

All these prophecies, of which we have been reviewing the accomplishment, were delivered in a time of perfect peace, when the Jews retained their own laws, and enjoyed the protection, as they were subject to the authority, of the

Roman empire, then in the zenith of its power. The wonder excited in the minds of his disciples at the strength and stability of the temple, drew forth from Jesus the announcement of its speedy and utter ruin. He foretold the appearance of false Christs and pretended prophets; the wars and rumours of wars; the famines and pestilences and earthquakes and fearful sights that were to ensue; the persecution of his disciples; the apostasy of many; the propagation of the gospel; the sign that should warn his disciples to flee from approaching ruin; the encompassing and enclosing of Jerusalem; the grievous affliction of the tender sex; the unequalled miseries of all; the entire destruction of the city; the shortening of their sufferings, that still some might be saved; and that all this dread crowd of events, which might well have occupied the progress of ages, was to pass away within the limits of a single generation. None but He who discerns futurity could have foretold and described all these things; and their complete and literal fulfilment shows them to be indubitably the revelation of God.

But the prophecies also mark minuter facts, if possible more unlikely to have happened. Jerusalem was to be ploughed over as a field; to be laid even with the ground; of the temple one stone was not to be left upon another; the Jews were to be few in number; to be led captive into all nations; to be sold for slaves and none would buy them. And each of these predictions was strictly verified. Titus commanded the whole city and temple to be razed from the foundation. The soldiers were not then disobedient to their general. Avarice combined with duty and with resentment: the altar, the temple, the walls, and the city, were overthrown from the base, in search of the treasures which the Jews, beset on every hand by plunderers, had concealed and buried during the siege. Three towers and the rem-

nant of a wall alone stood, the monument and memorial of Jerusalem ; and the city was afterwards ploughed over by Terentius Rufus. In the siege, and in the previous and subsequent destruction of the cities and villages of Judea, according to the specified enumeration of Josephus, about one million three hundred thousand suffered death. Ninety-seven thousand were led into captivity. They were sold for slaves, and were so despised and disesteemed, that many remained unpurchased. And their conquerors were so prodigal of their lives, that, in honour of the birth-day of Domitian, two thousand five hundred of them were placed, in savage sport, to contend with wild beasts, and otherwise to be put to death.¹

But the miseries of their race were not then at a close. There was a curse on the land, that hath scathed it, a judgment on the people that *scattered* them throughout the world. Many prophecies respecting them yet remain to be considered, and much of their history is yet untold. The prophecies are as clear as the facts are visible.

Yet Jerusalem, though devoted to destruction, was not given up to perpetual desolation. In pronouncing its doom, while from the Mount of Olives he beheld the city, Jesus wept over it. Bewailing Jerusalem and addressing it, he also said, *How often would I have gathered thy children together !*

¹ Tacitus, who flourished about thirty years after the destruction of Jerusalem, speaks of the strength of the fortifications of that city, the immense riches and strength of the temple, the factions that raged during the siege, as well as of the prodigies that preceded its fall. And he particularly mentions the large army brought by Vespasian to subdue Judea, "a fact which shows the magnitude and importance of the expedition." Philostratus particularly relates, that Titus declared, after the capture of Jerusalem, that he was not worthy of the crown of victory, as he had only lent his hand to the execution of a work in which God was pleased to manifest his anger. Dion Cassius records the conquest of Judea by Titus and Vespasian, the obstinate and bloody resistance of the Jews during the siege, the destruction of the temple by fire. It is recorded by Maimonides, and in the Jewish Talmud, (as cited by Basnage and Lardner,) that Terentius Rufus, an officer in the Roman army, tore up with a ploughshare the foundations of the temple. The triumphal arch of Titus, commemorative of the destruction of Jerusalem, and with figures of Roman soldiers, bearing on their shoulders the holy vessels of the temple, is still to be seen at Rome.

and ye would not ! Behold your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, TILL ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. The men of Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonah ; but the inhabitants of Jerusalem repented not at the preaching of Jesus. They would not be gathered together unto him, though he would have gathered them even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings ; and they have been scattered unto all the ends of the earth, and to this day they are wanderers throughout the world, even in regions which their fathers never knew. To them Jerusalem exists only in their memories and their hopes. It has been possessed by Gentiles, but not by Jews. But he who was crucified without the walls of Jerusalem by Gentiles and by Jews, did not give up that city to the everlasting possession of an alien race ; yet he set no shorter limit to the national expatriation of the people whose capital Jerusalem had for ages been, than that which involves the destiny of Jews and Gentiles. *There shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led captive into all nations : and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles UNTIL the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*¹ In a previous age Jerusalem had been destroyed, and the Jews had been led captive into a distant land ; but the walls of Babylon could confine them no longer, when the prescribed time of their captivity had expired, but then at once the kingdom was taken from Babylon and the Jews returned to Jerusalem. Not seventy merely, but eighteen hundred years confirm the words of Jesus : Jerusalem is still trodden down—not by one people only, whether Greek or Roman or any other,—but by the Gentiles, or nations of whatever name, while the Jews are still scattered among

¹ Luke xxi. 23, 24.

them all. There is no prohibition in the words of Jesus against the possession of Jerusalem by any other people, but its own children alone, till the hitherto unaccomplished *times of the Gentiles* shall be fulfilled.

The times of the Gentiles were not fulfilled when Julian tried in vain to rebuild the temple, and restore the Jews. The times of the Gentiles were not fulfilled when Bonaparte said that Jerusalem did not lie within the line of his operations, though, not knowing his destiny, he then idly dreamt of being an Eastern conqueror. In the wailing language of the prophet it might long have been asked, *Who shall have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem? or who shall bemoan thee? or who shall turn aside to ask 'thy peace?'*¹ But, without here noting other signs of these times which differ from the past, it may be said that there are many now, who understand the meaning of these words which were written for a generation to come, *Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come. For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof.*²

¹ Jer. xv. 5.

² Ps. cii. 13, 14.

CHAPTER IV.

PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE JEWS.

WHILE Moses, as a divine legislator, promised to the Israelites that their prosperity and happiness and peace would all keep pace with their obedience, he threatened them with a gradation of punishments, rising in proportion to their impenitence and iniquity : and neither in blessings nor in chastisements hath the Ruler among the nations dealt in like manner with any people. But their wickedness, and consequent calamities, greatly preponderated and are yet prolonged. The retrospect of the history of the Jews, since their dispersion, could not, at the present day, be drawn in truer terms, than in the unpropitious auguries of their prophet above three thousand two hundred years ago. In the most ancient of all records, we read the lively representation of the present condition of the most singular people upon earth. Moses professed to look through the glass of ages ; the revolution of many centuries has brought the object immediately before us : we may scrutinize the features of futurity as they then appeared to his prophetic gaze ; and we may determine between the probabilities whether they were conjectures of a mortal who “ knows not what a day may bring forth,” or the revelation of that Being “ in whose sight a thousand years are but as yesterday.”

“ I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you ; and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. And upon them that are left of you I will send a faintness into their hearts, in the lands of their

enemies ; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them ; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword ; and they shall fall when none pursueth ;—and ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies. And ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands ; and also in the iniquities of their fathers, shall they pine away with them. And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly.¹ And the Lord shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the Lord shall lead you.² The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies : thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them : and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.³ The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart : and thou shalt grope at noon-day as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways : and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save thee. Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people, —there shall be no might in thine hand. The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up ; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed alway : so that thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see. The Lord shall bring thee unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known ;—and thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word, among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee.⁴ Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of

¹ Lev. xxvi. 33, 36–39, 44.

² Deut. iv. 27.

³ Deut. xxviii. 25.

⁴ Deut. xxviii. 28, 29, 32, 33, 36, 37.

all things ; therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things : and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee. And the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance.¹ All these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee ;—and they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever. And it shall come to pass, that, as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you ; so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought ; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest : but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind : and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life. In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even ! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning ! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.²

The writings of all the succeeding prophets abound with similar predictions. “ I will cause them to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth.—I will cast you out of this land into a land that ye know not, where I will not show you favour. I will feed them with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink. I will scatter them also among the heathen, whom neither they nor their fathers have known.”³

¹ Deut. xxviii. 47, 48, 59.

² Ibid. 45, 46, 63–67.

³ Jer. xv. 4 ; xvi. 13 ; ix. 15, 16.

I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for their hurt, to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, in all places whither I shall drive them : and I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence among them, till they be consumed from off the land that I gave unto them and to their fathers.¹ I will bereave them of children. I will deliver them to be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven them.² I will execute judgments in thee, and the whole remnant of thee will I scatter into all the winds.³ I will scatter them among the nations, and disperse them in the countries.⁴ They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed : their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord : they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels : because it is the stumbling-block of their iniquity.⁵ I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth. Death shall be chosen rather than life by all the residue of them that remain of this evil family, which remain in all the places whither I have driven them, saith the Lord of hosts. They shall be wanderers among the nations.⁶ Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes ; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed. Then said I, Lord, how long ? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land.⁷ Though they go into captivity

¹ Jer. xxiv. 9, 10.² Jer. xv. 7 ; xxix. 18.³ Ezek. v. 10.⁴ Ezek. xii. 15.⁵ Ezek. vii. 19.⁶ Amos ix. 9. Jer. viii. 3. Hos. ix. 17.⁷ Isa. vi. 10-12.

before their enemies, thence will I command the sword, and it shall slay them : and I will set mine eyes upon them for evil, and not for good.¹ But he that scattereth Israel will gather him and keep him.² But fear not thou, O my servant Jacob, and be not dismayed, O Israel : for, behold, I will save thee from afar off, and thy seed from the land of their captivity.—I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee ; but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure ; yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished.³ The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim. Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king ; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days.”⁴

All these predictions respecting the Jews are delivered with the clearness of history and the confidence of truth. They represent the manner, the extent, the nature, and the continuance of their dispersion, their persecutions, their blindness, their sufferings, their feebleness, their fearfulness, their pusillanimity, their ceaseless wanderings, their hardened impenitence, their insatiable avarice, and the grievous oppression, the continued spoliation, the marked distinction, the universal mockery, the unextinguishable existence, and unlimited diffusion of their race.

They were to be plucked from off their own land, smitten before their enemies, consumed from off their own land, and left few in number. The Romans destroyed their cities and ravaged their country ; and the inhabitants who escaped from the famine, the pestilence, the sword, and the captivity, were forcibly expelled from Judea, and fled as houseless wanderers, into all the surrounding regions. But

¹ Amos ix. 4.² Jer. xxxi. 10.³ Jer. xlv. 27, 28.⁴ Hosea iii. 4, 5.

they clung, for a time, around the land which their fathers had possessed for so many ages, and on which they looked as an inheritance allotted by Heaven to their race; and they would not relinquish their claim to the possession of it by any single overthrow, however great. Unparalleled as were the miseries which they had suffered in the slaughter of their kindred, the loss of their property and their homes, the annihilation of their power, the destruction of their capital city, and in the devastation of their country by Titus, yet the fugitive and exiled Jews soon resorted again to their native soil; and sixty years had scarcely elapsed, when, deceived by an impostor, allured by the hope of a triumphant Messiah, and excited to revolt by intolerable oppression, they strove by a vigorous and united but frantic effort, to reconquer Judea, to cast off the power of the Romans, which had everywhere crushed them, and to rescue themselves and their country from ruin. A war which their enthusiasm and desperation alike protracted for two years, and in which, exclusive of a vast number that perished by famine and sickness and fire, five hundred and eighty thousand Jews are said to have been slain, terminated in their entire discomfiture and final banishment. They were so beset on every side, and cut down in detached portions by the Roman soldiers, that, in the words of a heathen historian, very few of them escaped. Fifty of their strongholds were razed from the ground, and their cities sacked and consumed by fire; Judea was laid waste and left as a desert.¹ Though a similar fate never befell any other people without proving the extirpation of their race or the last of their miseries, that awful prediction, in its reference to the Jews, met its full completion—which yet they survived, to await in every country, when exiles from their own, an accumulation of almost unceasing calamities,

¹ Dion. Cassius, lib. lxi. Jackson, Patrick, Basnage, &c.

protracted throughout many succeeding ages—*they were rooted out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation.*¹ A public edict of the Emperor Adrian rendered it a capital crime for a Jew to set a foot in Jerusalem;² and prohibited them from viewing it even at a distance. Heathens, Christians, and Mohammedans have alternately possessed Judea. It has been the prey of the Saracens: the descendants of Ishmael have often overrun it: the children of Israel have alone been denied the possession of it, though thither they ever wish to return, and though it forms the only spot on earth where the ordinances of their religion can be observed. And, amidst all the revolutions of states, and the extinction of many nations, in so long a period, the Jews alone have not only ever been aliens in the land of their fathers, but whenever any of them have been permitted, at any period since the time of their dispersion, to sojourn there, they have experienced even more contumelious treatment than elsewhere. And to this day, (while the Jews who reside in Palestine, or who resort thither in old age, that their bones may not be laid in a foreign land, are alike ill-treated and abused by Greeks and Franks,³) the haughty deportment of the despotic Mussulman, and the abject state of the poor and helpless Jews, are painted to the life by the prophet. *The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low.*⁴

But the extent is still more remarkable than the manner of their dispersion. Many prophecies describe it, and foretold, thousands of years ago, what we now behold. *They have been scattered among the nations—among the heathen*

¹ Isaiah vi. 11. Jer. iv. 29. Deut. xxix. 28.

² Tertul. Ap. c. xxi. p. 51. Ibid. Adv. Judæos, c. xiii. p. 146, ed. Paris, 1608. Basnage's Continuation of Josephus, b. vi. c. 9, § 27.

³ General Straton's MS. Journal.

⁴ Deut. xxviii. 43.

—among the people, even from one end of the earth unto the other. They have been removed into all the kingdoms of the earth; the whole remnant of them has been scattered into all the winds; they have been dispersed throughout all countries, and sifted among the nations like as corn is sifted in a sieve, and yet not the least grain has fallen upon the earth; though dispersed throughout all nations, they have remained distinct from them all. And there is not a country on the face of the earth where the Jews are unknown. They are found alike in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. They are citizens of the world, without a country. Neither mountains, nor rivers, nor deserts, nor oceans, which are the boundaries of other nations, have terminated their wanderings. They abound in Poland, in Holland, in Russia, and in Turkey. In Germany, Spain, Italy, France, and Britain, they are more thinly scattered. In Persia, China, and India, on the east and on the west of the Ganges, they are *few in number among the heathen*. They have trod the snows of Siberia, and the sands of the burning desert, and the European traveller hears of their existence in regions which he cannot reach, even in the very interior of Africa, south of Timbuctoo.¹ From Moscow to Lisbon, from Japan to Britain, from Borneo to Archangel, from Hindostan to Honduras, no inhabitant of any nation upon the earth would be known in all the intervening regions but a Jew alone.

But the history of the Jews throughout the whole world, and in every age since their dispersion, verifies the most minute predictions concerning them; and to a recital of facts too well authenticated to admit of dispute, or too notorious for contradiction, may be added a description of them all in the very terms of the prophecy. In the words of Basnage, the elaborate historian of the Jews, “Kings

¹ Lyon's Travels in Africa, p. 146.

have often employed the severity of their edicts, and the hands of the executioner, to destroy them; the seditious multitude has performed massacres and executions infinitely more tragical than the princes. Both kings and people, heathens, Christians, and Mohammedans, who are opposite in so many things, have united in the design of ruining this nation, and have not been able to effect it. The bush of Moses, surrounded with flames, has always burned without consuming. The Jews have been driven from all places of the world, which has only served to disperse them in all parts of the universe. They have, from age to age, run through misery and persecution, and torrents of their own blood."¹ Their banishment from Judea was only the prelude to their expulsion from city to city, and from kingdom to kingdom. Their dispersion over the globe is an irrefragable evidence of this, and many records remain that amply corroborate the fact. Not only did the first and second centuries of the Christian era see them twice rooted out of their own land, but each succeeding century has teemed with new calamities to that once chosen but now long-rejected race. The history of their sufferings is a continued tale of horror. Revolt is natural to the oppressed; and their frequent seditions were productive of renewed privations and distresses. Emperors, kings, and caliphs, all united in subjecting them to the same "iron yoke." Constantine, after having suppressed a revolt which they raised, and having commanded their ears to be cut off, dispersed them as fugitives and vagabonds into different countries. In the fifth century they were expelled from Alexandria, which had long been one of their safest places of resort. Justinian yielded to none of his predecessors in hostility and severity against them. He abolished their synagogues, prohibited them even from entering into caves for the exercise

¹ Basnage, b. vi. c. i. sect. 1. Jortin's Remarks on Eccl. Hist. vol. ii. p. 181, &c.

of their worship, rendered their testimony inadmissible, and deprived them of the natural right of bequeathing their property; and when such oppressive enactments led to insurrectionary movements among the Jews, their property was confiscated, many of them were beheaded, and so bloody an execution of them prevailed, that, as is expressly related, "all the Jews of that country trembled;"¹ *a trembling heart was given them*. In the reign of the tyrant Phocas, a general sedition broke out among the Jews in Syria. They and their enemies fought with equal desperation. They obtained the mastery in Antioch; but a momentary victory only led to a deeper humiliation, and to the infliction of more aggravated cruelties than before. They were soon subdued and taken captive, many of them were maimed, others executed, and all the survivors were banished from the city. Gregory the Great afforded them a temporary respite from oppression, which only rendered their spoliation more complete, and their suffering more acute, under the cruel oppression of Heraclius. That emperor, unable to satiate his hatred against them by inflicting a variety of punishments on those who resided within his own dominions, and by finally expelling them from the empire, exerted his influence so effectually against them in other countries, that they suffered under a general and simultaneous persecution from Asia to the furthest extremities of Europe.² In Spain, conversion, imprisonment, or banishment, were their only alternatives. In France a similar fate awaited them. They fled from country to country, seeking in vain any rest for the sole of their foot. Even the wide-extended plains of Asia afforded them no resting-place, but have often been spotted with their blood, as well as the hills and valleys of Europe. Mohammed, whose imposture has been the law and the faith of such countless millions, has, from the precepts

¹ Basnage's Hist. b. vi. c. xxi. sect. 9.

² Ibid. 17.

of the Koran, infused into the minds of his followers a spirit of rancour and enmity towards the despised and misbelieving Jews. He set an early example of persecution against them, which the Mohammedans have not yet ceased to imitate. In the third year of the Hegira, he besieged the castles which they possessed in the Hegiasa, compelled those who had fled to them for refuge and defence, to an unconditional surrender, banished them the country, and parted their property among his Mussulmans. He dissipated a second time their re-combined strength, massacred many of them, and imposed upon the remnant a permanent tribute. The church of Rome ever ranked and treated them as heretics. The canons of different councils pronounced excommunication against those who should favour or uphold the Jews against Christians; enjoined all Christians neither to eat nor to hold any commerce with them; prohibited them from bearing public offices or having Christian slaves; appointed them to be distinguished by a mark; decreed that their children should be taken from them, and brought up in monasteries; and what is equally descriptive of the low estimation in which they were held, and of the miseries to which they were subjected, there was often a necessity, even for those who otherwise oppressed them, to ordain that it was not lawful to take the life of a Jew without any cause.¹ Hallam's account of the Jews, during the middle ages, is short, but significant. "They were everywhere the objects of popular insult and oppression, frequently of a general massacre. A time of festivity to others was often the season of mockery and persecution to them. It was the custom at Thoulouse to smite them on the face every Easter. At Beziers they were attacked with stones from Palm-sunday to Easter, an anniversary of insult and cruelty generally

¹ Dupin's Ecc. Hist. Canons of different Councils. Toledo, A.D. 633. Meux, 845. Paris, 846. Pavia, 850. Metz, Coyaco, 1050. Rouen, 1074. Ravenna, 1311. Saltzburgh, 1420.

productive of bloodshed, and to which the populace were regularly instigated by a sermon from the bishop. It was the policy of the kings of France to employ them as a sponge to suck their subjects' money, which they might afterwards express with less odium than direct taxation would incur. It is almost incredible to what a length extortion of money from the Jews was carried. A series of alternate persecution and tolerance was borne by this extraordinary people with an invincible perseverance, and a talent of accumulating riches, which kept pace with the exactions of their plunderers. Philip Augustus released all Christians in his dominions from their debts to the Jews, reserving a fifth part to himself. He afterwards expelled the whole nation from France."¹ St Louis twice banished, and twice recalled them; and Charles VI. finally expelled them from France. From that country, according to Mezeray, they were seven times banished. They were expelled from Spain; and by the lowest computation, one hundred and seventy thousand families departed from that kingdom.² "At Verdun, Treves, Mentz, Spires, Worms, many thousands of them were pillaged and massacred. A remnant was saved by a feigned and transient conversion; but the greater part of them barricaded their houses, and precipitated themselves, their families, and their wealth, into the rivers or the flames. These massacres and depredations on the Jews were renewed at each crusade."³ In England, also, they suffered great cruelty and oppression at the same period. During the crusades, the whole nation united in the persecution of them. In a single instance, at York, fifteen hundred Jews, including women and children, were refused all quarter, could not purchase their lives at any price, and, frantic with despair, perished by a mutual slaughter. Each master was the murderer of his family,

¹ Hallam, vol. i. pp. 233, 234.

² Basnage, b. vii. c. xxi. Bishop Newton.

³ Gibbon's Hist. vol. xi. c. lviii. p. 26.

when death became their only deliverance. The scene of the castle of Massada, which was their last fortress in Palestine, and where nearly one thousand perished in a similar manner,¹ was renewed in the castle of York. So despised and hated were they, that the barons, when contending with Henry III., to ingratiate themselves with the populace, ordered seven hundred Jews to be slaughtered at once, their houses to be plundered, and their synagogue to be burned. Richard, John,² and Henry III. often extorted money from them; and the last, by the most unscrupulous and unsparing measures, usually defrayed his extraordinary expenses with their spoils, and impoverished some of the richest among them. His extortions at last became so enormous, and his

¹ Basnage, b. vii. c. x. sect. 20. Joseph. b. vii. c. viii. ix. Bp. Newton. Rapin's Hist. of England, vol. iii. p. 97.

² The persecutions to which the Jews were subjected at that period, are described with strict truth in the historical romance of Ivanhoe. They are characterized as "a race which, during these dark ages, was alike detested by the credulous and prejudiced vulgar, and persecuted by the greedy and rapacious nobility." (Vol. i. p. 83.) "Except perhaps the flying fish, there was no race existing on the earth, in the air, or the waters, who were the objects of such an unremitting, general, and relentless persecution as the Jews at this period. Upon the slightest and most unreasonable pretences, as well as upon accusations the most absurd and groundless, their persons and property were exposed to every turn of popular fury; for Norman, Saxon, Dane, and Briton, however adverse their races were to each other, contended which would look with greatest detestation upon a people whom it was accounted a point of religion to hate, to revile, to despise, to plunder, and to persecute. The kings of the Norman race, and the independent nobles, who followed their example in all acts of tyranny, maintained against this devoted people a persecution of a more regular, calculated, and self-interested kind. It is a well-known story of King John, that he confined a wealthy Jew in one of the royal castles, and daily caused one of his teeth to be torn out, until, when the jaw of the unhappy Israelite was half-disfurnished, he consented to pay a large sum, which it was the tyrant's object to extort from him. The little ready money that was in the country, was chiefly in the possession of this persecuted people, and the nobility hesitated not to follow the example of their sovereign in wringing it from them by every species of oppression, and even personal torture." (Ibid. pp. 120, 121.) The fictitious history of Isaac of York is delineated in a manner equally descriptive of the facts, and confirmatory of the prophecies respecting the Jewish people; and there exists not the history of any individual of any other nation, whether drawn from fancy or from fact, which combines so many of the prophetic characteristics of the fate of a Jew, as that which has thus been delineated, by a master's hand, as a representation of their condition, at a period about twenty-six centuries posterior to the prediction, and in a country two thousand miles remote from the place where it was first uttered and from the only land ever possessed by the Jews.

oppression so grievous, that, in the words of the historian, he reduced the miserable wretches to desire leave to depart the kingdom;¹ but even self-banishment was denied them. Edward I. completed their misery, seized on all their property, and banished them the kingdom. Above fifteen thousand Jews were rendered destitute of any residence, were despoiled to the utmost, and reduced to ruin. Nearly four centuries elapsed before the return to Britain of this abused race.

Some remarkable circumstances attest, without a prolonged detail of their miseries, that they have been a people everywhere peculiarly oppressed. The first unequivocal attempt at legislation in France was an ordinance against the Jews. And towards them alone one of the noblest charters of liberty on earth—Magna Charta, the Briton's boast—legalized an act of injustice.² For many ages after their dispersion, they found no resting-place in Europe, Asia, or Africa, but penetrated, in search of one, to the extremities of the world. In Mohammedan countries they have ever been subject to persecution, contempt, and every abuse. They are in general confined to one particular quarter of every city, (as they formerly were to old Jewry in London); they are restricted to a peculiar dress; and in many places are shut up at stated hours. In Hamadan, as in all parts of Persia, "they are an abject race, and support themselves by driving a peddling trade;—they live in a state of great misery, pay a monthly tax to the government, and are not permitted to cultivate the ground, or to have landed possessions."³ They cannot appear in public, much less perform their religious ceremonies, without being treated with scorn and contempt.⁴ The revenues of the prince of Bohara are derived from a tribute paid by five hundred.

¹ Rapin's History of England, vol. iii. p. 405.

² Articles xii. xiii.

³ Morier's Travels in Persia, p. 379.

⁴ Sir J. Malcolm's History of Persia, vol. ii. p. 425.

families of Jews, who are assessed according to the means of each. In Zante they exist in miserable indigence, and are exposed to considerable oppression.¹ At Tripoli, when any criminal is condemned to death, the first Jew who happens to be at hand is compelled to become the executioner; a degradation to the children of Israel to which no Moor is ever subjected.² In Egypt they are despised and persecuted incessantly.³ In Arabia they are treated with more contempt than in Turkey.⁴ The remark is common to the most recent travellers both in Asia and Africa,⁵ that the Jews themselves are astonished, and the natives indignant, at any act of kindness, or even of justice, that is performed towards any of this "despised nation" and persecuted people. In Southey's *Letters from Spain and Portugal*, this remarkable testimony is borne respecting them; "Till within the last fifty years the burning of a Jew formed the highest delight of the Portuguese; they thronged to behold this triumph of the faith, and the very women shouted with transport as they saw the agonized martyr writhe at the stake. Neither sex nor age could save this persecuted race; and Antonio Joseph de Silvia, the best of their dramatic writers, was burned alive because he was a Jew." Few years have elapsed since there was a severe persecution against them in Prussia and in Germany, and in several of the smaller states of the latter country they are not permitted to sell any goods even in the common markets. The pope has lately re-enacted some severe edicts against them: and ukases have been issued in quick succession,⁶ restraining the Jews from all traffic throughout the interior government of Russia. "They are absolutely prohibited, on pain of immediate banishment,

¹ Hughes' *Travels*, vol. i. p. 150.

² Lyon's *Travels*, p. 16.

³ Denon's *Travels in Egypt*, vol. i. p. 213.

⁴ Niebuhr's *Travels*, vol. i. p. 408.

⁵ Morier's *Travels in Persia*, p. 266. Lyon's *Travels in Africa*, p. 32.

⁶ 15th November 1797. 25th February 1823. 8th June 1826.

from offering any article to sale,"¹ whether in public or private, either by themselves or by others. They are not allowed to reside, even for a limited period, in any of the cities of Russia, without an express permission from government, which is granted only in cases where their services are necessary or directly beneficial to the state. A refusal to depart, when they become obnoxious to so rigid a law, subjects them to be treated as vagrants; and none are suffered to protect or to shelter them. Though the observance of such edicts must, in numerous instances, leave them destitute of any means of support, yet their breach or neglect exposes them to oppression under the sanction of the law, and to every privation and insult, without remedy or appeal. And though they may thus become the greatest objects of pity, all laws of humanity are reversed by imperial decrees towards them. For those who harbour Jews that are condemned to banishment for having done what all others may innocently do, are, as a late Russian ukase respecting them bears, "amenable to the laws as the abettors of vagrants,"²

¹ Ukase, quoted from "The World," of date 31st October 1827. Ib. article viii.

² *Note*.—While the prophecies described the past and existing miseries of the Jews, they refer with no less precision to the time yet to come, when the children of Israel shall have returned to the loved land of their fathers, and their rebuke shall have ceased from off the face of the earth, and when they shall prize their blessings the more highly, as contrasted with the former sufferings of their race. And the word of God, confirmed as its prophetic truth is by the workings of the wrath of man, and by the policy of earthly monarchs, will doubtless triumph over the highest mandates of mortals, and receive new illustrations of its truth, when these shall have passed away. And the eleventh article of the ukase, now in force, merits, in reference to a special prediction, particular notice, and we may subjoin it here, together with its corresponding text, premising merely that it is to a specific district of dismembered Poland that the Rabbins are sent away. "Rabbins, or other religious functionaries, are to be sent away by the police officer, immediately on the discovery that they are such." "Thy teachers shall not be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers." (Isaiah xxx. 20.)

Lord Byron's brief and emphatic description of the Jews is equally characteristic of the fact, and illustrative of the predictions.

Tribes of the *wandering foot* and *weary breast*,
When shall we flee away and be at rest?

They shall find no rest for the sole of their foot. I will send a faintness into their heart,—a trembling heart and sorrow of mind.—But he that hath scattered Israel

and, as in numberless instances besides, no man shall save them.

While the recent ameliorated condition of the Jews in the more civilized countries of Europe begins to give promise of the dawn of that day when the cup of trembling shall be taken out of their hands, and while signs are not wanting to show that it shall be given into the hands of their enemies, new illustrations may still be adduced to this hour of the indignities and miseries to which they are subjected. A recent testimony from Turkey bears that "it is impossible to express the contemptuous hatred in which the Osmanlis (Turks) hold the Jewish people; and the *veriest* Turkish *urchin* who may encounter one of the fallen nation on his path, has his mite of insult to add to the degradation of the outcast and wandering race of Israel. Nor dare the oppressed party revenge himself even upon this puny enemy, whom his very name suffices to raise up against him."¹ Instances are added of a Turkish boy of ten years of age felling to the earth a feeble Jewess, and of Turkish boys, in their amusement, insulting and tormenting a Jew. *I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them.—As for my people, children are their oppressors.*²

These facts, though they form but a brief and most imperfect record, and therefore but a very faint image of all their sufferings, show that the Jews *have been removed into all kingdoms for their hurt; that a sword has been drawn after them; that they have found no rest for the sole of their foot; that they have not been able to stand before their enemies; there has been no might in their hands; their very avarice has proved their misery; they have been spoiled*

will gather him—and it is asked, *who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?* (Isaiah lx. 8.)

¹ The City of the Sultan, and the Domestic Manners of the Turks in 1836, by Miss Pardoe, vol. ii. p. 362, 363.

² Isaiah iii. 4, 12.

evermore; they have been oppressed and crushed alway; they have been mad for the sight of their eyes that they did see, as the tragical scenes at Massada, and York, and many others testify: they have often been left in hunger, and thirst, and nakedness, and in want of all things; a trembling heart and sorrow of mind have been their portion; they have often had none assurance of their life; their plagues have been wonderful and great, and of long continuance; and they have been for a sign and for a wonder during many generations.

But the predictions rest not even here. It was distinctly prophesied that the Jews would reject the gospel; that, from the meanness of his mortal appearance, and the hardness of their hearts, they would not believe in a suffering Messiah; *that they would be smitten with blindness and astonishment of heart; that they would continue long, having their ears deaf, their eyes closed, and their hearts hardened; and that they would grope at noon-day, as the blind gropeth in darkness.*¹ And the great body of the Jewish nation has continued long to reject Christianity. They retain the prophecies, but discern not their light, having obscured them by their traditions. Many of their received opinions are so absurd and impious, their rites are so unmeaning and frivolous, their ceremonies are so minute, absurd, and contemptible, that the account of them would surpass credibility, were it not a transcript of their customs and of their manners, and drawn from their own authorities.² No words can more strikingly or justly represent the contrast between their irrational tenets, their degraded religion, their superstitious observances, and the dictates of enlightened reason, and of the gospel which they vilify, than the emphatic description, *Thou shalt grope at noon-day as the blind gropeth in dark-*

¹ Deut. xxviii. 28, 29.

² See Allen's Modern Judaism. The Edinburgh Encyclopædia, art. *Jews*.

ness. And if any other instances be wanting of the prediction of events infinitely exceeding human foresight, the dispositions of all nations respecting them are revealed as explicitly as their own. That the Jews have been *a proverb, an astonishment, a by-word, a taunt, and a hissing among all nations*,—though one of the most wonderful of facts, unparalleled in the whole history of mankind, and as inconceivable in its prediction as miraculous in its accomplishment,—is a truth that stands not in need of any illustration or proof, and of which witnesses could be found in every country under heaven. Many prophecies concerning the Jews, of more propitious import, that yet remain to be accomplished, are reserved for testimonies to future generations, if not to the present. But it is worthy of remark, as prophesied concerning them, that they have *not been utterly destroyed, though a full end has been made of their enemies*; that the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Romans, though some of the mightiest monarchies that ever existed, have not a single representative on earth; while the Jews, oppressed and vanquished, banished and enslaved, and spoiled evermore, have survived them all, and to this hour overspread the world. Of all the nations around Judea, the Persians alone, who restored them from the Babylonish captivity, yet remain a kingdom.

The Scriptures also declare that the covenant with Abraham, that God would give the land of Canaan to his seed for *an everlasting possession*,¹ would never be broken; but that the children of Israel shall be taken from among the heathen, gathered on every side, and brought into their own land, to dwell for ever where their fathers dwelt. Three thousand seven hundred years have elapsed since the promise was given to Abraham: and is it less than a miracle, that, if this promise had been made to the de-

¹ Gen. xvii. 8. Psal. cv. 8-12.

scendants of any but of Abraham alone, it could not now possibly have been realized, as there exists not on earth the known and acknowledged posterity of any other individual, or almost of any nation, contemporary with him?

That the people of a single state (which was of very limited extent and power in comparison with some of the monarchies which surrounded it) should first have been rooted up out of their own land in anger, wrath, and great indignation, the like of which was never experienced by the mightiest among the ancient empires, which all fell imperceptibly away at a lighter stroke; and that afterwards, though scattered among all nations, and finding no ease among them all, they should have withstood eighteen centuries of almost unremitted persecution; and that after so many generations have elapsed, they should still retain their distinctive form, or, as it may be called, their individuality of character, is assuredly the most marvellous event that is recorded in the history of nations; and if it be not acknowledged as a "sign," it is in reality, as well as in appearance, "a wonder," the most inexplicable within the province of the philosophy of history. But that, after the endurance of such manifold woes, such perpetual spoliation, and so many ages of unmitigated suffering, during which their life was to hang in doubt within them, they should still be, as actually they are, the possessors of great wealth; and that this fact should so strictly accord with the prophecy, which describes them on their final restoration to Judea, as taking *their silver and their gold with them*, and eating the riches of the Gentiles;¹ and also that, though captives or fugitives "few in number," and the miserable remnant of an extinguished kingdom at the time they were "scattered abroad," they should be to this hour a numerous people,—and that this should have been expressly implied

¹ Isaiah lx. 9; lxi. 6.

in the prophetic declaration descriptive of their condition on their restoration to Judea, after all their wanderings, that *the land shall be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants—and that place shall not be found for them*;¹ are facts which as clearly show, to those who consider them at all, the operation of an overruling providence, as the revelation of such an inscrutable destiny is the manifest dictate of inspiration.

Such are the *prophecies*, and such are the *facts* respecting the Jews ;—and from premises like these the feeblest logician may draw a moral demonstration. If they had been utterly destroyed ; if they had mingled among the nations ; if in the space of nearly eighteen centuries after their dispersion, they had become extinct as a people ; even if they had been secluded in a single region, and had remained united ; if their history had been analogous to that of any nation upon the earth—an attempt might, with some plausibility or reason, have been made, to show cause why the prediction of their fate, however true to the fact, ought not in such a case to be sustained as evidence of the truth of inspiration. Or if the past history and present state of the Jews were not of a nature so singular and peculiar, as to bear out to the very letter the truth of the prophecies concerning them, with what triumph would the infidel have produced these very prophecies as fatal to the idea of the inspiration of the Scriptures. And when the Jews have been scattered throughout the whole earth ; when they have remained everywhere a distinct race ; when they have been despoiled evermore, and yet never destroyed ; when the most wonderful and amazing facts, such as never occurred among any people, form the ordinary narrative of their history, and fulfil literally the prophecies concerning them, may not the believer challenge his adversary to the

¹ Isaiah xlix. 19. Zech. x. 10.

production of such credentials of the faith that is in *him*? They present an unbroken chain of evidence, each link a prophecy and a fact, extending throughout a multitude of generations, and not yet terminated. Though the events, various and singular as they are, have been brought about by the instrumentality of human means, and the agency of secondary causes, yet they are equally prophetic and miraculous; for the means were as impossible to be foreseen as the end, and the causes were as inscrutable as the event; and they have been, and still in numberless instances are, accomplished by the instrumentality of the enemies of Christianity. Whoever seeks a miracle, may here behold a sign and a wonder, than which there cannot be a greater. And the Christian may bid defiance to all the assaults of his enemies from this stronghold of Christianity, impenetrable and impregnable on every side.

These prophecies concerning the Jews are as clear as a narrative of the events. They are ancient as the oldest records in existence; and it has never been denied that they were all delivered before the accomplishment of one of them. They were so unimaginable by human wisdom, that the whole compass of nature has never exhibited a parallel to the events. And the facts are visible, and present, and applicable even to a hairbreadth. Could Moses, as an uninspired mortal, have described the history, the fate, the dispersion, the treatment, the dispositions of the Israelites to the present day, or for three thousand four hundred years, seeing that he was astonished and amazed on his descent from Sinai, at the change in their sentiments, and in their conduct, in the space of forty days? Could various persons have testified, in different ages, of the self-same and of similar facts, as wonderful as they have proved to be true? Could they have divulged so many secrets of futurity, when of necessity they were utterly ignorant of

them all? The probabilities were infinite against them. For the mind of man often fluctuates in uncertainty over the nearest events, and the most probable results; but in regard to remote ages, when thousands of years shall have elapsed, and to facts respecting them, contrary to all previous knowledge, experience, analogy, or conception, it feels that they are dark as death to mortal ken. And, viewing only the dispersion of the Jews, and some of its attendant circumstances—how their city was laid desolate—their temple, which formed the constant place of their resort before, levelled with the ground, and ploughed over like a field—their country ravaged, and themselves murdered in mass—falling before the sword, the famine, and the pestilence—how a remnant was left, but despoiled, persecuted, enslaved, and led into captivity,—driven from their own land, not to a mountainous retreat, where they might subsist with safety, but dispersed among all nations, and left to the mercy of a world that everywhere hated and oppressed them—shattered in pieces like the wreck of a vessel in a mighty storm—scattered over the earth, like fragments on the waters, and, instead of disappearing, or mingling with the nations, remaining a perfectly distinct people, in every kingdom the same, retaining similar habits, and customs, and creeds, and manners, in every part of the globe, though without ephod, teraphim, or sacrifice—meeting everywhere the same insult, and mockery, and oppression—finding no resting-place without an enemy soon to dispossess them—multiplying amidst all their miseries—surviving their enemies—beholding, unchanged, the extinction of many nations, and the convulsions of all—robbed of their silver and of their gold, though cleaving to the love of them still, as the stumbling-block of their iniquity—often bereaved of their very children—disjoined and disorganized, but uniform and unaltered—ever bruised, but never broken—weak,

fearful, sorrowful, and afflicted—often driven to madness at the spectacle of their own misery—taken up in the lips of talkers—the taunt, and hissing, and infamy of all people, and continuing ever, what they are to this day, the sole proverb common to the whole world; how did every fact, from its very nature, defy all conjecture, and how could mortal man, overlooking a hundred successive generations, have foretold any one of these wonders that are now conspicuous in these latter times? Who but the Father of Spirits, possessed of perfect prescience, even of the knowledge, of the will, and of the actions of free, intelligent, and moral agents, could have revealed their unbounded and yet unceasing wanderings, unveiled all their destiny, and unmasked the minds of the Jews and of their enemies, in every age and in every clime? The creation of a world might as well be the work of chance as the revelation of these things. It is a visible display of the power and of the prescience of God, an accumulation of many miracles. And although it forms but a part of a small portion of the Christian evidence, it lays not only a stone of stumbling, such as infidels would try to cast in a Christian's path, but it fixes an insurmountable barrier at the very threshold of infidelity, immovable by all human device, and impervious to every attack.

Still it may be said, that, however truly such prophecies depict the condition of the Jews in past ages, yet they do not in all things apply so closely, in some lands at least, to the state of that people now. But there are other prophecies besides these, and other times for them. Signs are not wanting to show, that according to the Scriptures the *times of the Gentiles* may be drawing near to their completion; and with that completion is associated another history for Israel than that of the past. The angel who showed unto Daniel “that which is noted in the scripture of truth,” said

unto him, "*I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days, and there is none that holdeth with me in these things but Michael your prince.*"¹ He spake of a time when *Michael shall stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people. . . . But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.*² *Ye that make mention of the Lord* (or, *ye who are the Lord's remembrancers*), saith Isaiah, *give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. . . . Prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway,*³ &c. When many run to and fro, and knowledge is increased, and these signs are seen of the time when the words shall no longer be shut up nor the book sealed, the dark ages are not to return; and connected as these words are with what shall befall the Jews in the latter days, the long dark night of Judaism, however it may terminate, may be drawing to its close. In these railway times, and railway progress of political events and increasing knowledge, no marvel it is, according to many scriptures, that some change should come over the spirit of the time, affecting both Gentiles and Jews. The fulfilling of the times of the Gentiles is fixed by Jesus as affecting the one as well as the other. And if the preparation for that be begun, or about to begin, it must needs touch the seed of Jacob,—a people who are not a nation, and who for eighteen centuries have not had a land which, except in name, they could call their own,—as well as the kingdoms of the world, whose times hang on the continuance of their dispersion. We only glance at such a theme here, as there is evidence which points to that which is to come; a line of demarcation, as it were, yet not stationary now, between the past and the future. The subject properly pertains to

¹ Dan. x. 14, 21.² Dan. xii. 1, 4.³ Isa. lxii. 6, 7, 10.

the prophetic history and destiny of Israel,—and also of the world.

The time was, for many days and in many lands, when, of *scattered* Judah, *no man did lift up his head*.¹ But now there are Jews who take their places among *the chief men of the earth*; a Jewish family can count its barons; a Jew, of late, has for the first time been Mayor of London; and in kingdoms, which enacted severe laws against them, Jews now rank among legislators. The time long was when they were a people not only *scattered* but also *peeled*, or *spoiled evermore*; and, as “necessity is the mother of invention,” the banished and outlawed Jews, when about to fly from any land from which they were expelled, unable to take their gold or silver or goods from thence, exchanged these for whatever money-order they could obtain, available in another kingdom, whither they were to wander in seeking rest for their unresting feet. Hence originated bills of exchange. But now the presentation of *scrip* in the hands of “the Hebrews” can any day affect, if not even control, the exchanges of Europe; and though the prediction has respect to a future day, yet were they to leave this kingdom or that to-morrow, to return after many centuries of expatriation to the land given by an everlasting covenant to the seed of Jacob, they could legally and openly take *their silver and gold with them*. The time long was, when in papal kingdoms they were *bereaved of their children*, and no man did save them. But the time now is, when the imperial government of France,—a kingdom from which sentences of expulsion were repeatedly passed and enforced against them,—whose soldiers garrison the city of the popes, can deal with the papal government of Rome, concerning “the abduction of a Jewish child;” and a single instance in an Italian city of such an act, once so common and disregarded, can supply

¹ Zech. i. 21.

a theme for a leading article in "the leading journal of Europe," in terms such as these,—“We need not swell the chorus which has arisen from all parts of Europe against the iniquity of the transaction. We may leave the matter to France and Austria, which are too much indebted, in the strictest sense of the word, to the co-religionists of MORTARA to allow the papal theology to be fully carried out against them. The Jews know how to take care of themselves; they are rich, united, and love their tribe; they are high in the councils of emperors, and they know that not even the pope and cardinals are independent of their aid. They will no doubt carry the day, and restore the infant Mortara to the faith, the habits, and the antipathies of his race.”¹ The time is changed since imperial edicts prohibited a Jew from resting in Judea, or coming within sight of Jerusalem: and one of the results of the Crimean war has been the proclamation of equal rights and of religious privileges to all throughout the Turkish empire; and foreigners, without distinction of Jew or Gentile, are temptingly invited to settle in its thinned provinces. In the land of Judea there are *few men left*; and open as it is, without any legal impediment to them, there are not wanting Jews to fill it to overflowing because of *the multitude of men*, more numerous by far than their fathers were when they were *plucked from off the land*. But, while “the Grand Seignior” has not security to give to any people for the peaceful possession of any part of his dominions, the customs of the ports of Palestine have been pledged in security to a Jewish House for a Turkish Loan. While the Turkish government is too feeble to maintain its authority in that land, who can say that a political necessity may not arise in these eventful times, for “settling the affairs of Syria” in another manner than has yet been tried, by restoring Judea to the Jews, and thereby showing,

¹ The *Times*, October 26, 1858.

however unconsciously, in the appointed time, whose counsel shall stand, and whose word shall prevail. But the spirit of prophecy shows, by many testimonies yet to be fulfilled, that such an event would not be *the end of the matter*, but rather, in these accelerating days, another step to "the beginning of the end."

In "the statutes and judgments and laws which the Lord made between him and the children of Israel in Mount Sinai by the hand of Moses," it is written, "I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies: and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them, &c. And yet, for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away. But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors",¹ &c. Ezekiel saw, in vision, an open valley, full of bones, very many and very dry. He was commanded to prophecy upon these bones. *And as I prophesied*, he says, *there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone, &c.* The interpretation of the vision was Jehovah's, not man's; and it repudiates any other. *Then he said unto me, These bones are the whole house of Israel.*² Scattered as they have been among the nations, and sifted like corn in a sieve,—for these varied similes all show vivid facts,—yet now it may truly be said that "the Jews are a united people, and love their tribe;" as if the bones were seen coming together, bone to his bone, when all was noiseless and motionless before; and the time may thus be come when the tribe shall be seen in united action again. In the present day this vision alone, in the changes which it indicates, would admit of voluminous illustrations, diverse from those of their prophetic and actual history in ages past. But here we only say that these changes in the house of Israel, known to all who look within it, do not falsify the past, but rather prognosticate the

¹ Lev. xxvi. 36, 44-46.

² Ezek. xxxvii. 1-18.

future, as denoting changes which show the effect of this vision, in accordance with similar predictions, as other words of prophecy begin to fall upon the people Israel, in token of the commencement of the transition through which, in all its parts, they have to pass ere it be completed, and these *dry bones* shall live, *and stand upon their feet, an exceeding great army*. These are figures; but they are the interpreted figures of facts, showing what the house of Israel has been, and what the same house of Israel yet shall be.

In times past the Jews have been witnesses for God, in the judgments which have come upon them according to his word. Such witnesses, whatever be the change in their outward condition, they have still, according to Scripture, to be, till they look on him whom they have pierced, and He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. Of them it is testified in the Old Testament and in the New,—*This people have I formed for myself: they shall show forth my praise.*¹ *If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?*²

After a separation of so many centuries, a long-continued and uniform experience may prompt and seemingly sanction the opinion that the Jews and Judea are dissevered for ever; and dogmatical assertions are not wanting to show, if they could, that that is a matter with which “chance” alone has to do, and that an appeal to prophecy is an appeal to it. The Lord of glory spake not thus to the prophet Isaiah, when in response to the question touching the blindness of *this people; Lord, how long?* He pointed first of all to *the cities* and to *the land*; and told, in terms alike plain and precise, what they should be, not only till Israel’s blindness

¹ Isa. xliii. 21.

² Rom. xi. 15.

should cease, but ere the Jews should return to the land of their fathers.¹

¹ Isa. vi. 13; xvii. 6, 9-14. The return of the Jews to their own land has been objected to on the ground that *promises* do not pertain to an unconverted people. Neither do they. The following words are not those of promise, but rather of judgments which shall precede the final redemption and restoration of Israel:—"The word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross: all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are even the dross of silver. Therefore thus saith the Lord God: Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in mine anger and in my fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the Lord have poured my fury upon you." Ezek. xxii. 18-22. Their land lieth desolate so long as they be in their enemies' land; but they shall not see Jesus till they say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the *inhabitants of Jerusalem*, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced. . . . *In that day* there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the *inhabitants of Jerusalem*, for sin and for uncleanness. . . . And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: and they shall call upon my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God. And the Lord shall be King over all the earth. And there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited. Zech. xii. 10; xiii. 1, 9; xiv. 9, 11.

CHAPTER V.

SECTION I.

PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE LAND OF ISRAEL.

THE writings of the Jewish prophets not only described the fate of that people for many generations subsequent to the latest period to which the most unyielding scepticism can pretend to affix the date of these predictions ; but while the cities were teeming with inhabitants, and the land flowing with abundance, for centuries before Judea ceased to count its millions, they foretold the long reign of desolation that would ensue. The land is a witness as well as the people. Its aspect in the present day is the precise likeness delineated by the pencil of prophecy, when every feature that could admit of change was the reverse of what it now is : and it is necessary only to compare the predictions themselves with that proof of their fulfilment, which, were all other testimony to be excluded, heathens and infidels supply.

The calamities of the Jews were to rise progressively with their iniquities. They were to be punished again and again, "yet seven times for their sins."¹ And in the greatest of the denunciations which were to fill up the measure of their punishments, the long-continued desolation of their country is ranked among the worst and latest of their woes ; and the prophecies respecting it which admit of a *literal* interpretation, and which have been literally fulfilled, are abundantly clear and expressive.

¹ Levit. xxvi. 18, 21, 24.

"I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation.—And I will bring the land into desolation : and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you ; and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land ; even then shall the land rest and enjoy her sabbaths. The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths while she lieth desolate without them.¹ So that the generation to come of your children that shall rise up after you, and the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall say, when they see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses which the Lord hath laid upon it—Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land ? what meaneth the heat of this great anger ? The anger of the Lord was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book."²

In the *vision* of Isaiah, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem, we read, Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire : your land strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers. And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city. Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.³ Ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden that hath no water.⁴ Of a truth many houses shall be desolate, even great and fair, without inhabitant. Yea, ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and the seed of an homer shall yield an ephah.—Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waste

¹ Levit. xxvi. 31-34, 43.

² Deut. xxix. 22, 24, 27.

³ Isaiah i. 7-9.

⁴ Isaiah i. 30.

places of the fat ones shall strangers eat.¹ Then, said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord hath removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land. But yet in it shall be a tenth; and it shall return and shall be eaten: as a teil-tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves.² The glory of Jacob shall be made thin, and the fatness of his flesh shall wax lean. And it shall be as when the harvest-man gathereth the corn, and reapeth the ears with his arm; and it shall be as he that gathereth ears in the valley of Rephaim. Yet gleanings-grapes shall be left in it, as the shaking of an olive-tree, two or three berries in the top of the uttermost bough, four or five in the outmost fruitful branches thereof, saith the Lord God of Israel.³ Behold, the Lord maketh the earth⁴ (the land) empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled; for the Lord hath spoken this word. The earth (land) mourneth and fadeth away:—it is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate:—and few men left. The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merry-hearted do sigh. The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them

¹ Isaiah v. 9, 10, 17.

² Isaiah vi. 11–13.

³ Isaiah xvii. 4–6.

⁴ The twenty-fourth chapter of Isaiah contains a continuous prophetic description (exactly analogous to other predictions) of the desolation of Judea, during the time that the “inhabitants thereof” were to be “scattered abroad;” and it is only necessary, in order to prevent any appearance of ambiguity, to remark, that the very same word in the original, which in the English translation is here rendered *earth*, is, in subsequent verses of the same chapter, also translated *land*; evidently implying the land of Israel, the inhabitants of which were to be “scattered abroad;” and so obviously is this the meaning of the word, that the chapter is properly entitled “the deplorable judgments of God upon the land.”

that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth. They shall not drink wine with a song ; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it. The city of confusion is broken down ; every house is shut up, that no man may come in. There is a crying for wine in the streets ; all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone.—When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive-tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done.¹ Yet the defenced city shall be desolate, and the habitation forsaken, and left like a wilderness : there shall the calf feed, and there shall he lie down, and consume the branches thereof. When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off : the women come and set them on fire : for it is a people of no understanding.² Many days and years shall ye be troubled, ye careless women : for the vintage shall fail, the gathering shall not come. Tremble, ye women that are at ease ; be troubled, ye careless ones : strip you, and make you bare, and gird sackcloth upon your loins. They shall lament for the teats, for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine. Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers ; yea, upon all the houses of joy in the joyous city : because the palaces shall be forsaken, the multitude of the city shall be left ; the forts and towers shall be for dens for ever, a joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks ; until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest.³ The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth : he hath broken the covenant, he hath despised the cities, he regardeth no man. The earth mourneth and languisheth : Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down : Sharon is like a wilderness ; and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits.⁴

¹ Isaiah xxiv. 1, 3–11, 13.

² Isaiah xxxii. 10–15.

³ Isaiah xxvii. 10, 11.

⁴ Isaiah xxxiii. 8, 9.

Destruction upon destruction is cried ; for the whole land is spoiled.—I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the Lord and by his fierce anger. For thus hath the Lord said, The whole land shall be desolate ; yet will I not make a full end. For this shall the earth mourn,—because I have spoken it, I have purposed it, and will not repent, neither will I turn back from it.¹ How long shall the land mourn, and the herbs of every field wither, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein?—I have forsaken mine house, I have left mine heritage ;—Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard, they have trodden my portion under foot, they have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness. They have made it desolate, and being desolate it mourneth unto me ; the whole land is made desolate, because no man layeth it to heart. The spoilers are come upon all high places through the wilderness :—no flesh shall have peace. They have sown wheat, but shall reap thorns : they have put themselves to pain, but shall not profit : and they shall be ashamed of your revenues, because of the fierce anger of the Lord.² Thus saith the Lord God to the mountains (of Israel), and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys ; Behold, I, even I, will bring a sword upon you, and I will destroy your high places.—In all your dwelling-places the cities shall be laid waste, and the high places shall be desolate ; that your altars may be laid waste and made desolate, and your idols may be broken and cease.—I will stretch out my hand upon them, and make the land desolate, yea, more desolate than the wilderness towards Diblath, in all their habitations.³ I will bring the worst of the heathen, and they shall possess their houses : I will also make the pomp of the strong to cease ; and their holy places shall be defiled. Say unto the people of the land, Thus saith the

¹ Jer. iv. 20, 26–28.² Jer. xii. 4, 7, 10–13.³ Ezek. vi. 3, 6, 14.

Lord God of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and of the land of Israel ; They shall eat their bread with carefulness, and drink their water with astonishment, that her land may be desolate from all that is therein, because of the violence of all them that dwell therein. Every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished.¹ Hear this, ye old men, and give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land. Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers ? Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation. That which the palmer-worm hath left hath the locust eaten ; and that which the locust hath left hath the canker-worm eaten ; and that which the canker-worm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten. The field is wasted, the land mourneth—because joy is withered away from the sons of men. And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the canker-worm, and the caterpillar, and the palmer-worm.—And my people shall never be ashamed.² The city that went out by a thousand shall leave an hundred, and that which went forth by an hundred shall leave ten, to the house of Israel. Seek not Bethel ;—Bethel shall come to nought.³ Behold, I will set a plumb-line in the midst of my people Israel : I will not again pass by them any more. And the high places of Isaac shall be desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste.⁴ I will make Samaria as an heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard : and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will discover the foundations thereof.”⁵

Numerous and clear as these denunciations are, yet such was the long-suffering patience of God, and such the rebellious spirit of the Israelites of old, that it had become a proverb in the land, “the days are prolonged, and every

¹ Ezek. vii. 24 ; xii. 19. Jer. xix. 8.

² Joel i. 2-4, 10, 12 ; ii. 25, 26.

³ Amos v. 3, 5.

⁴ Amos vii. 8, 9.

⁵ Micah i. 6.

vision faileth." But though that proverb ceased, when great calamities did overtake them, and a temporary desolation came over their land, yet the curses denounced against it were not obliterated by a partial and transient fulfilment, but, on the renewed and unrepented wickedness of the people, fell upon them and their land with stricter truth, and, as foretold, with sevenfold severity.

Moses and the prophets set blessings and curses before the Israelites, with the avowed purpose that they might choose between them. But while the prophetic writings abound with warnings, the Scriptural records of Israelitish history show how greatly these warnings were disregarded. The word of God, which is perfect work, abideth for ever: and it returns not to him void, but fulfils the purpose for which he sent it. And after the statutes and judgments of the Lord had been set before the Israelites for the space of a thousand years from the time that they were first declared, the "burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi," instead of speaking, even then, of repealed judgments, closes the Jewish Scriptures with this last command, "Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments;"¹ and, affixed to the command to remember these, the very last words of the Old Testament, which seal up the vision and the prophecies, plainly indicate, that however long the God of Israel might bear with the Jews for transgressing the law, while the law only was given them, yet on their refusal to repent when the prophet, who was to be "the messenger of the Lord," would be sent unto *them*, the Lord would come and "smite the earth, or the land, with a curse."

The term of the continuance of these judgments, and of their full completion, is distinctly marked, as commensurate with the dispersion of the Jews, and terminating with their

¹ Malachi iv. 4.

final restoration. So long as they be in their enemies' land, their own land lieth desolate. The judgments were not to be removed from it "until the Spirit be poured (upon the Jews) from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field."¹ And the prophecies not only portray Judea while forsaken of the Lord, his heritage left, and given into the hands of its enemies, but they also delineate the character and condition of the dwellers therein, while its ancient inhabitants were to be scattered abroad, and ere the time come when he shall reign in Jerusalem before his ancients gloriously.² Annunciations of a future and final restoration almost uniformly accompany the curses denounced against the land. And frequent, and express as words can be, are the references throughout the prophecies to the period yet to come, when the children of Israel shall be gathered out of all nations, and when the land then, at last and for ever, brought back from desolation, and the cities, repaired after the desolations of many generations, and the mountains of Israel, which have been *always waste*, shall be no more desolate, nor the people termed forsaken any more.³ After the Messiah was to be cut off, and the sacrifice and oblation to cease, the ensuing *desolations* were to reach *even to the consummation*, and till that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.⁴ And Jerusalem, as Jesus hath declared, shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.⁵

Neither the dispersion of the Jews nor the desolation of Judea is to cease, according to the prophecies, till other evidence shall thereby be given of prophetic inspiration. The application to the present period, or to modern times, of the prophecies relative to the desolation of Judea, is thus abundantly manifest. And the more numerous they are, so

¹ Isaiah xxxii. 15.

² Isaiah xxiv. 1, 23.

³ Isaiah lxi. 4. Ezek. xxxvi. 8, 10; xxxvii. 21; xxxviii. 8. Isaiah lxii. 4.

⁴ Dan. ix. 27.

⁵ Luke xxi. 24.

much the more severe is the test which they abide. And while the Jews are not yet gathered from all the nations, nor planted in their own land to be no more pulled out of it,¹—nor its destroyers and they that laid it waste, gone forth from it,²—nor the *old waste places* built, nor the *foundations of many generations* raised up, nor the land brought back from desolation,³—the effect of every vision is still to be seen, and even now, at this late period of the times of the Gentiles, though the blessed *consummation* may not be very distant, there is abundant evidence to complete the proof that the curses that are written in the book of the Lord have been brought upon the land,⁴ and rest on it at this day.

The devastation of Judea is so “astonishing,” and its poverty as a country so remarkable, that, forgetful of the prophecies respecting it, and in the rashness of their zeal, infidels have attempted to draw an argument from thence against the truth of Christianity, by denying the possibility of the existence of so numerous a population as can accord with Scriptural history, and by representing it as a region singularly unproductive and irreclaimable.⁵ But though

¹ Amos ix. 14, 15. ² Isaiah xlix. 17. ³ Isaiah lviii. 12. ⁴ Deut. xxix. 27.

⁵ Voltaire, without adducing any authority whatever in support of his assertion, and without expressly declaring that, in lieu of such evidence, he was gifted with an intuitive knowledge of the historical and geographical fact,—speaks of the ancient state of Palestine with derision, describes it as one of the worst countries of Asia; likens it to Switzerland, and says that it can only be esteemed fertile when compared with the desert. (Bp. Newton) “*La Palestine n’était que ce qu’elle est aujourd’hui, un des plus mauvais pays de l’Asie. Cette petite province,*” &c. (Œuvres de Voltaire, tom. xxvii. p. 107.) Without citing, on the other hand, the ample evidence of Josephus and of Jerome, both of whom were inhabitants of Judea, and more adequate judges of the fact, the following testimony to the great fertility of that country, not being chargeable with the partiality which might be attached to the opinion either of a Christian or of a Jew, may be given in answer to the groundless assertion of Voltaire; testimony which ought to have been better known and appreciated even by that high priest of modern infidelity, if the sacrifice of truth on the altar of wit had not been too common an act of his devotion to the chief god of his idolatry. “*Corpora hominum salubria et ferentia laborum; rari imbres, uber solum. Ecuberant fruges nostrum ad morem; præterque eas balsamum et palmæ.* —Magna pars Judææ vicis dispergitur; habent et oppida. Hierosolyma genti

they have voluntarily abandoned this indefensible assumption, they have left to the believer the fruits of their concession; they have given the most unsuspecting testimony to the confirmation of the prophecies, and have served to establish the cause which they sought to ruin. The evidence of ancient authors; the fertility of the soil wherever a single spot can be cultivated; the vegetable mould, now covered with thorns, on the sides of the terraced mountains, which may have clothed them with a richer and more frequent harvest than the most fertile vale; and the multitude of the ruins of cities that now cover the extensive but uncultivated and desert plains, bear witness that there was a numerous and condensed population in a country flowing with food; and that, if any history recorded its greatness, or any prophecies revealed its desolation, they have both been amply verified.

The acknowledgments of Volney, and the description which he gives from personal observation, are sufficient to confute entirely the gratuitous assumptions and insidious sarcasms of Voltaire: and, wonderful as it may appear, copious extracts may be drawn from that writer, whose unwitting or unwilling testimony is as powerful an attestation of the completion of many prophecies, when he relates facts of which he was an eye-witness, as his untried theories, his ideal perfectibility of human nature, if released from the restraints of religion, and his perverted views both of the nature and effects of Christianity, have proved greatly instrumental in subverting the faith of many, who, un-

caput. Illic immensæ opulentiaë templum et primis munimentis urbs." (Taciti Hist. lib. v. cap. vi. viii. Rel. Pales.) "Ultima Syriarum est Palæstina, per intervalla magna protenta, cultis abundans terris et nitidis, et civitates habens quasdam egregias, nullam sibi cedentem, sed sibi vicissim velut ad perpendicularum æmulas." (Ammianus Marcellinus, lib. xiv. cap. viii. § 11. ibid.) "Nec sane viris, opibus, armis quicquam copiosius Syria." (Flori Hist. lib. ii. cap. viii. § 4.) "Syria in hortis operosissima est. Indeque proverbium Græcis, Multa Syrorum olera." (Plinii Hist. Nat. lib. xx. cap. v.)

guarded by any positive evidence, gave heed to such seductive doctrines. There needs not to be any better witness of facts confirmatory of the prophecies, and in so far conclusive against all his speculations, than Volney himself. Of the natural fertility of the country, and of its abounding population in ancient times, he gives the most decisive evidence. "Syria unites different climates under the same sky, and collects within a small compass pleasures and productions which nature has elsewhere dispersed at great distances of time and place. To this advantage, which perpetuates enjoyments by their succession, it adds another, that of multiplying them by the variety of its productions. —With its numerous advantages of climate and soil, it is not astonishing that Syria should always have been esteemed a most delicious country, and that the Greeks and Romans ranked it among the most beautiful of their provinces, and even thought it not inferior to Egypt."¹ After having assigned several just and sufficient reasons to account for the large population of Judea in ancient times, in contradiction to those who were sceptical of the fact, he adds ; "Admitting only what is conformable to experience and nature, there is nothing to contradict the great population of high antiquity. Without appealing to the positive testimony of history, there are innumerable monuments which depose in favour of the fact. Such are the prodigious quantity of ruins dispersed over the plains, and even in the mountains, at this day deserted. On the remote parts of Carmel are found wild vines and olive-trees, which must have been conveyed thither by the hand of man : and in the Lebanon of the Druses and Maronites, the rocks, now abandoned to fir-trees and brambles, present us in a thousand places with terraces, which prove that they were anciently

¹ Volney's Travels in Egypt and Syria, vol. i. pp. 316, 321. English Translation, Lond. 1787.

better cultivated, and consequently much more populous than in our days.”¹

“Syria,” says Gibbon, “one of the countries that have been improved by the most early cultivation, is not unworthy of the preference. The heat of the climate is tempered by the vicinity of the sea and mountains, by the plenty of wood and water; and the produce of a fertile soil affords the subsistence and encourages the propagation of men and animals. From the age of David to that of Heraclius the country was overspread with ancient and flourishing cities; the inhabitants were numerous and wealthy.”² Such evidence has merely been selected as the most unsuspicious, though that of many others might also be adduced. The country in the vicinity of Jerusalem is indeed rocky, as Strabo represents it. But these regions, as throughout the hill country of Judea, are well adapted for the cultivation of the vine and the olive; and of old Israel *sucked honey from the rock, and oil out of the flinty-rock*. “Even the sides of the most barren mountains in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem had been rendered fertile, by being divided into terraces, like steps rising one above another, where soil has been accumulated with astonishing labour.”³ “In any part of Judea,” Dr Clarke adds, “the effects of a beneficial change of government are soon witnessed in the conversion of desolated plains into fertile fields.—Under a wise and beneficent government the produce of the Holy Land would exceed all calculation. Its perennial harvest, the salubrity of its air, its limpid springs, its rivers, lakes, and matchless plains, its hills and vales, all these, added to the serenity of the climate, prove this to be indeed a field which the Lord

¹ Volney's Travels in Egypt and Syria, vol. ii. p. 368.

² Gibbon, vol. ix. p. 403.

³ Clarke's Travels, vol. ii. p. 520. General Straton describes these terraces as resembling the *gradus* of a theatre, and particularly marked them as vestiges of ancient “luxuriance.”

hath blessed.”¹ But the facts of the former fertility, as well as of the present desolation of Judea, are established beyond contradiction; and, in attempting in this respect to invalidate the truth of sacred history, infidels have either been driven, or have reluctantly retired, from the defenceless ground which they themselves had once assumed, and have given room whereon to rest an argument against their want of faith as well as of veracity. For, in conclusion of this matter, it surely may, without any infringement of truth or justice, be remarked, that the extent of the present desolation—the very allegation on which they would discredit the Scriptural narrative of the ancient glory of Judea—being itself a clearly-predicted truth, then the greater the difficulty of reconciling the knowledge of what it was to the fact of what it is, and the greater the difficulty of believing the possibility of so “astonishing” a contrast, the more wonderful are the prophecies which revealed it all, the more completely are they accredited as a voice from heaven, and the argument of the infidel leads the more directly to proof against himself. Such is “the positive testimony of history,” and such the subsisting proofs of the former grandeur and fertility of Palestine, that we are now left, without a cavil, to the calm investigation of the change in that country from one extreme to another, and of the consonance of that change with the dictates of prophecy.

Having visited the land of Judea, the writer may confidently affirm that it sets before the eyes of every beholder, who knows the Bible and can exercise his reason, a three-fold illustration of the truth of Scripture, in respect to its past, present, and yet destined state. It not only presents to view the scenes of Scriptural history, often recognisable to this hour as the places of which the sacred penmen wrote, and where events were transacted, the knowledge of which

¹ Clarke's Travels, vol. ii. p. 521.

shall ever be the common property of man; but it exhibits, even among the barren but terraced mountains of Israel, such proofs of ancient cultivation, as show to a demonstration, that the ancient fertility and glory of the land were not inferior to what Scripture represents. Looking on it as it is, the whole land now bears the *burden* of the word of the Lord. And yet it shows as clearly, whenever that burden shall be removed and the Lord shall in mercy *remember the land*, that it yet retains the capability, as if it had never been laid waste, of blooming forth anew in all its beauty, and bearing its fruits in all their profusion, till its mountains and plains be again clothed with as rich and varied a produce as any land on earth can yield.

To that consummation of all their predictions concerning it, the prophets ever looked. The people that have been scattered throughout the world shall finally be brought back to the land of their fathers, to be no more plucked out of it for ever. And the fruitfulness of the land of Canaan, long dormant but never dead, shall reappear in its glory, when the *wilderness* shall be turned into a *fruitful field*, and there shall be *no more desolation*. But notwithstanding the *blasphemies that have been spoken against the mountains of Israel*, no man who has stood in the midst of them could fail to see that they lie desolate as smitten with a curse, and that they shall be desolate no more when that judgment shall be taken away. Many prophetic songs of rejoicing and praise await the time *when the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose*, and the terraced mountains of Israel shall be planted anew by the hands of Israel's children, and bear the shame of the heathen no more. *Prophecy unto the mountains of Israel and say, Ye mountains of Israel, —Because they have made you desolate,—and ye are taken up in the lips of talkers, and are an infamy of the people :*

therefore, ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord God : Thus saith the Lord God to the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, to the desolate wastes, and to the cities that are forsaken, which became a prey and derision to the residue of the heathen that are round about, etc.—Ye, O mountains of Israel, shall yield your fruit to my people of Israel.—And I will settle you after your old estates, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings ; neither will I cause men to hear in thee the shame of the heathen any more ; neither shalt thou bear the reproach of the people any more.—Ezek. xxxvi. 1–15. The mockery of misjudging scoffers, and the blasphemies from the *lips of talkers*, uttered in purposed refutation of the truth of the word of God, are turned into a testimony against themselves. And while the extent of the predicted desolation shows how wonderful their realization has been, another reversal of the fate of Judea is yet reserved and destined to show, in obvious application to events yet to come, how *mercy rejoiceth over judgment* ; how truth, even in things opposite to each other, when rightly discerned, is ever triumphant ; and how the lips of profane talkers, having tendered their testimony, shall be silent for ever, and the mountains of Israel be neither a *derision* nor a reproach any more.

Under any regular and permanent government, a region so favoured by climate, so diversified in surface, so rich in soil, and which had been so luxuriant for ages, would naturally have resumed its opulence and power ; and its permanent desolation, alike contradictory to every suggestion of experience and of reason, must have been altogether inconceivable by man. But *the land was to be overthrown by strangers, to be trodden down ; mischief was to come upon mischief, and destruction upon destruction, and the land was to be desolate.* The Chaldeans devastated Judea, and

led the inhabitants into temporary captivity. The kings of Syria and Egypt, by their extortions and oppression, often impoverished the country. The Romans held it long in subjection to their iron yoke. And the Persians contended for the possession of it. But in succeeding ages, still greater destroyers than any of the former appeared upon the scene to perfect the work of devastation. "In the year 622 (636) the Arabian tribes collected under the banners of Mohammed, seized or rather laid it waste. Since that period, torn to pieces by the civil wars of the Fatimites and the Omniades; wrested from the califs by their rebellious governors; taken from them by the Turkmen soldiery; invaded by the European Crusaders; retaken by Mamelouks of Egypt, and ravaged by Tamerlane and his Tartars, it has at length fallen into the hands of the Ottoman Turks."¹ *It has been overthrown by strangers; trodden under foot: destruction has come upon destruction.*

The Scriptural record bears, that when the Israelites first entered into possession of their inheritance, the Lord, according to his word by Moses, gave them a land for which they did not labour, and cities which they built not; and they dwelt in them.² But ere that promise was thus fulfilled, at the time when the law was given them, and statutes and ordinances were set in Israel, it was written, among the curses denounced against disobedience, *I will make your cities waste.—I will scatter you among the heathen—and your cities shall be waste.*³ Other prophecies, pointing to distant ages, and to events not realized to this day, prescribe the only term of the desolation of the cities as of the land, *Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers; yea, upon all the houses of joy in the joyous city: because the palaces shall be forsaken, the multitude of the city shall be left; the forts and towers shall be for dens for ever—UNTIL*

¹ Volney's Travels, vol. i. p. 357.

² Joshua xxiv. 13.

³ Lev. xxvi. 31, 33.

*the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field.*¹ The curses, as recorded, were all to be completed on the land and on the people; and the blindness of Israel was not to cease, UNTIL *the cities should be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man.*²

SECTION II.

THE DESOLATION OF THE CITIES OF ISRAEL.

When Israel first entered into Canaan, a *hundred and twelve cities*, mentioned by name, together with their villages, fell to the lot of the tribe of Judah.³ Forty-eight cities were given to the Levites out of the possession of the other tribes. The half tribe of Manasseh, east of the Jordan, had for an inheritance all the region of Argob, with all the kingdom of Bashan, from Salcah to Edrei, in which were *sixty cities, fenced with high walls, gates, and bars, besides unwalled towns a great many.*⁴ In the histories of the wars of the Romans with the Jews, ere the last tribe of Israel was rooted out of their own land to be dispersed in every other, Tacitus, as already quoted, records that, besides the towns, great part of Judea was overspread with villages; and Josephus relates that Upper and Lower Galilee were thickly set with cities, and with populous villages. When finally the Jews were *besieged in all their gates*, a Roman historian gives a specification of their number, in testifying that five hundred strongly fortified citadels, and nine hundred and eighty-five noble villages, were overthrown to their foundations.⁵

Many of the cities of the land were rebuilt and repeopled, but not by Jews any more. Ptolemy, in the second century, gives in his geography the names of upwards of fifty cities

¹ Isaiah xxxii. 13-15.² Isaiah vi. 11.³ Joshua xv. 20-63.⁴ Deut. iii. 4, 5.⁵ Dion. Cass. Hist. Rom. lib. lxi. p. 798.

or towns, situated within the ancient borders of Israel, and a far greater number within the limits of the *kingdom of Solomon*. In the fourth century, according to Ammianus Marcellinus, Palestine had renowned cities that rivalled each other in their greatness. Syria, in the words of Gibbon, was overspread with ancient and flourishing cities to the days of Heraclius, in the seventh century. It contained, in the days of the Lower Empire, two hundred bishoprics; and though some of the sees are marked as villages, not a few were populous and splendid cities. Cæsarea, Antipatris, Monte-Pellegrino (Athlith), Ramlah, Ras, Lebona, Arca, Paneas, Safed, Akka (Acre,) Gerasa (Gerash,) Adgeloun, besides many other fortresses and walled towns in Syria, were strong enough to withstand the assaults of powerful armies, in the wars of the Crusades, and some of them were only taken after desperate and protracted sieges.¹ In the fourteenth century Syria, after the destruction of many of its cities and strongholds, could still count thirty fortresses.

Such records suit not the present day, in which ruins testify their truth as to the past. But the *names* of "ruined or deserted places," though only partially ascertained, are more numerous than the names which all ancient records, now extant, supply, of the cities and villages which of old were peopled either by Jews or Gentiles. City after city may now be called by its name, that each and all may bear witness to the word of the Holy One of Israel.

The progressive desolation of the cities of Syria has been traced by the author in other pages, in which their existing state of ruin or desertion is too minutely described to admit of recapitulation here, where so many prophecies demand a succinct illustration.² But having visited Palestine a second time since the treatise referred to was published, some supplementary proof, derived from personal observation, may

¹ See *Land of Israel*, p. 200-268.

² *Ibid.* pp. 296-333, 353-384.

be conjoined with other testimonies of the desolation that has come upon the cities, which, long after the days of the prophets, "overspread the land."

In the lists of Arabic names of places in Palestine given by the Rev. Dr. Eli Smith, who resided many years in Syria, and traversed many of its districts, *one hundred and three ruined or deserted places* are named, in the district of Hebron, and to the south of that town.¹ Among these, the ancient names of Kerioth, Arad, El-Moladah, Aroer (in Judah,) Beersheba, Elusa, Eboda, Tekoa, Berachah, Ramah, Ziph, Engedi, Maon, Carmel (of Judah,) Phogor, Gedor, Adoraim, Dumah, Anab, Socoh, Jattir, and Nezib, are recognised in the deserted ruins Karyetein, Tell Arad, el-Milh, Ararah, Bir es Seba, el-Khulasah, Abdeh, Tekua, Bereikut, er-Ram, Zif, Ain Jidy, Main, Kurmul, Faghur, Jedur, Dura, Daumeh, Annabeh, esh-Schuweikeh, Attir, and Beit Nusib.

Twenty-nine cities are named by Joshua as the uttermost cities of Judah towards the coast of Edom. But in travelling, as the writer did, from Hebron to that coast, and returning by a different route, not a single city, or town, or house, did we pass, or see on any side, except in utter ruin. In Smith's lists of places *south of Hebron* are the names of thirty-six "ruined or deserted places," but not one that is inhabited. They are all now numbered among the *decayed places of Judah*.

The head of a valley once crowned with *Carmel* of Judah, is now, on both sides and around it, covered with its ruins. The remains of two large churches, half a mile apart, the thick walls of a ruined castle, many heaps of hewn stones, and remains of walls nearly levelled with the ground, indicate no mean ancient city; while its situation, though all be desolate around it now, shows that of old it was worthy

¹ Robinson and Smith's Palestine, Second Appendix, Arabic Lists, pp. 114-117.

of its name of Carmel or fruitful. At *Karyetein* heaps of ruins mark the site of an ancient town. There are evident marks and remains of buildings spread over a large space at *Araar*, which, however decayed, recurring at short distances, give proof that the valley of Aroer of Judah was once thickly peopled; and that near to its borders on the south-east, Judah continued to be overspread with towns and villages. Of the ruins both of *Eboda* and *Tekoa*, as described by Dr Robinson and Dr. Smith, the principal in each are those of a large church, and of a castle and fortress. They "stumbled by accident" on the ruins of *Ruhaibeh*; but though thus discovered, and from the space these cover, they judged upon the spot that it must have been a city of not less than 12,000 or 15,000 inhabitants. The ruins of *Elusa*, once an episcopal city, cover, in their estimation, a space large enough for a population of 15,000 or 20,000 souls.

In the districts round Jerusalem there were, in 1835, *sixty-four* ruined or deserted places; and *thirty-nine* in the territories of Ramlah and Lydda.¹ Some of the villages, then inhabited, have since been added to their number.² In the districts of Nabulus or Neopolis, there were in the same year, *thirty* ruined or deserted places; *twenty* other villages in the same regions had been reduced to similar desolation or desertion in the year 1844. Among these *Shiloh*, once so famous in Israel, "is nothing more than a heap of fallen houses."³ Ras, a strong fortress in the days of the Crusaders, Thebez, Endor, Hermon, and Taanach, in their altered condition, but scarcely altered names, have sunk into the tenantless er-Ras, Tubas, Endur, Haramon, and Tannak.

Smith's lists of the names of places in the extensive districts of Tiberias, Nazareth, Acre, and Safed, and Huleh,

¹ Smith's Arabic Lists, Second Appendix, pp. 121-126.

² Shahmeh, el-Mansurah, Deir el-Muheisen, Deir Bezia.

³ Van de Velde, vol. ii. p. 287.

do not embrace "the uninhabited places." These regions included Upper and Lower Galilee, which, in the days of Josephus, were full of people, and overspread with cities and large villages. In traversing the great plain of Esdraelon, anciently that of Jezreel, no dwellings but tents of the wandering Arabs are passed, and no villages are now to be seen throughout it, save those which very sparingly skirt the base of the surrounding hills. The broad summit of Gerizzim, and the spacious top of Tabor, are alike covered with extensive ruins. Of the cities that bordered the lake of Tiberias, none remain but as utterly desolate. In Upper Galilee *the towns of Cæsarea Philippi*, into which Jesus went, are no more. The names of *seventeen ruined places* in the neighbourhood of Paneas, its miserable representative, are given by Burckhardt.¹ From Dan, in its vicinity, of which scarce a vestige remains, to Beersheba, also desolate, the traveller now passes—not from city to city—but from ruin to ruin; and from one end of the land to the other, anciently embracing the thousands of Israel, cities once crowded, and fortresses that could withstand armies, bear witness to the truth and power of that word as the Lord's, which has laid them in the dust, and made them a *pasture for flocks*, or *dens* for beasts, and covered them with thorns; and the traveller may now sometimes "stumble" on an ancient city, unseen till he *tread it under foot*.

Cities that existed in their prime long after the days of the latest of the prophets, are as utterly *desolate* as any in the land; and cities built by Romans are now as *waste* as any they destroyed. Of the former, the once princely capital of Herod the Great may here supply an illustration. Cæsarea, on the sea-coast, nearly midway between Acre and Jaffa, fallen and ruined as it lies, still exhibits traces of its ancient magnificence. Jesus was brought before Herod, as

¹ Pp. 44, 45.

Nazareth lay within his jurisdiction ; and Cæsarea, which rose to the height of its splendour seven centuries after the days of Isaiah, has sunk into utter desolation under the sentence that beforehand had passed indiscriminately on the cities of the land. Its walls, of far later construction and more circumscribed extent than those built by Herod, give evidence of its strength in times comparatively recent. But whether built anew by Saracens or Crusaders, whom its capture successively enriched, they could not finally avert its doom.

In the sixteenth century Rauwolf could speak of its large and broad streets, in which scarcely any one was to be seen, and of its stately antiquities, which then remained, though they are less stately now. Its desolation has since been perfected. Its streets are all encumbered and concealed by its fallen and indistinguishable ruins ;—and the nobler buildings of that once proud city, for the celebration of whose games the palace of the Cæsars was disfurnished of the richest ornaments, form at best but the larger heaps. Twenty thousand Jews were slain within it in the day of Jerusalem's fall ; but, populous as it long after was, it is now *without an inhabitant*. Paul was there imprisoned for two years, and though it ministered to the honour of Cæsar and the pride of Herod, it lies as low as if an apostle of Jesus had shaken off the dust of his feet as a testimony against it. Felix trembled when he there spake of judgment ; Cæsarea can now tell its own.

The comparatively modern wall that surrounded the less extended city was strongly fortified with bastions, which, though firmly built in the pyramidal form, have not remained unbroken. (See plate II.) Within it are seen heaps of desolated buildings covered with thistles, noxious weeds, and rank herbage, through which, covering the rough ruins, it is not easy to penetrate. Wild boars, hyenas, and

wolves, snakes and scorpions have long made it their resort or their abode.¹ The writer saw no living thing within it, except, when wearied with wandering on foot over its tangled ruins,—matted as they were, after the earlier rain, with thistles, hemlock, and other wild plants intertwined—he had scarcely begun to ride through them by a beaten track, when a large serpent darted across it through the rustling plants, and at the sight, his horse starting back literally shuddered under him, and could not be forced onward, where the multitude, after the oration of Herod, had shouted, “it is the voice of a god and not of a man,” and where, in later times, proud Romans, Saracens, and Templars, had gaily pranced along a street built of polished stones.

The ruins of a large church, which Pococke conjectured to be the cathedral of the archbishop, rise conspicuously in the midst of indiscriminate and indescribable heaps. It is about 150 feet long and 60 broad, with a vault beneath, 56 feet in length. Many fallen and broken columns, chiefly on the skirt of the ruins on the shore, denote the destruction of a splendid city. Others of granite or marble, alike prostrate, are partly buried in the ruins, where doubtless many are wholly concealed, as some in recent times have been raised up and carried away. The large columns, partly projecting from the ruins, can still show that lofty pillars adorned the city of Cæsarea. Between the more modern wall, on the south, and the ancient wall, which is distinctly traceable, are large green mounds, seemingly the graves of some of the noblest structures of Herod. Two of the most elevated of these enclose on both sides an oblong space, sweep round its eastern extremity, but leave it open towards the shore (as described by Josephus); and thus constitute

¹ Pococke, p. 59. Buckingham's Palestine, p. 137. Mr G. Robinson's Travels, i. p. 190. Clarke's Travels, ii. 645.



the form, as they mark the site, of a grand amphitheatre well fitted for the celebrated games of that *joyous city*. But the green mounds are no less adapted now for their present and predicted use, a *pasture of the flocks* of the wandering Arabs, after that wealthy and renowned city, like others in the land, has ceased to be a *spoil* and a *prey*.

The glory of man is as the flower of grass; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And when the last predicted fact concerning the cities of the land shall be accomplished, Herod's once boasted but long-forgotten labours will not be for ever lost. Cæsarea, utterly desolate, has its ample stores ready for the day when the *sons of strangers shall build up the walls* of the desolate cities of Israel. It was the capital of a kingdom in the days of Herod, and subsequently of the Roman province of Palestina Prima, and in later times an archiepiscopal city, to which seventeen bishoprics were subject. But its cities, like itself, have fallen. And in travelling along the desolate sea-shore of Canaan from Dor on the one side, to Mukhalid on the other, or from one miserable village to the next, a distance of about twenty miles, not a single inhabited place was passed or seen, and tents of the Bedouin, even close to the coast, are now the only dwellings of men.

Concerning the cities already referred to, the prediction is in each case a fact; and one and all are utterly *desolate, and without inhabitant*.

But other cities of Israel are *laid waste* or desolate, besides those in which no man dwells. A few miserable huts clustering round ruins, or raised as if in mockery over fallen cities, cannot redeem them from desolation. What they are may be contrasted with what they have been: and there is a word also for them.

In the districts attached to Neapolis, as still ranked among inhabited places, the defenceless villages or humble hamlets of Lubban, Jeljuleh, Salim, Beit Dejan, Acrabeh, Daumeh, Jeba, el-Fendakumieh, Jeblon, Shutta, Beisan, and Sebastieh, are the wrecks that bear the names of Lebonah, Gilgal, Salim, Beth Dagon, Acrabatene, Edumia, Geba, Pentacomias, Gilboa, Beth Shitta, Bethsan, or Scythopolis, once, according to Josephus and Pliny, the greatest city of Decapolis, and Sebaste, or Samaria, the ancient capital of the ten tribes of Israel.

Beisan, as described by Dr Richardson, is "a collection of the most miserable hovels, containing about 200 inhabitants." Its site is covered with large heaps of hewn stones, with prostrate columns of Corinthian architecture, emblems of the greatness of the fallen city. On the south end of the same valley of the Jordan, close, as Josephus describes the city, and as Mr Buckingham first marked its site, to the foot of the hills of Judah, as they rise from the plain, are the wide-spread vestiges of the city of Jericho, beside the fountain of Elisha, and between it and the hill, as partly on its sloping base. It is altogether in *utter ruin*. Bare, and partly broken walls, around which were some naked children, with not more than thirty houses covered with roofs, and others in ruins, form the modern *Rieha*, perhaps a suburb of the ancient city. In the country adjacent to Ramlah, the ancient Arimathea, there are found, at every step, as described by Volney, dry wells, cisterns fallen in, and vast vaulted reservoirs, which prove that in ancient times this town must have been upwards of a league and a half in circumference. "Solomon built Beth-horon the upper, and Beth-horon the nether, fenced cities, with walls, gates, and bars." The two small villages, "Beit' Ur, the upper and lower, represent the ancient upper and lower Bethoron." Though built by Solomon, they have been

overthrown to their foundations. In the one, "the foundations of large stones indicate an ancient site;" the other exhibits "traces of ancient walls and foundations." Between them are "foundations of large stones, the remains perhaps of a castle which once guarded the pass."¹ While *foundations of many generations* yet await the time when they shall be *raised up* again, cities that were celebrated in more modern times can only be renewed by a similar reconstruction. In the twelfth century the wealth of Paneas could bribe a king of Jerusalem, Baldwin III., to break a treaty that he might pay his debts; and the archbishop of Tyre, the historian of the Crusades, relates that the prey was so great and unheard of that the countries of the Crusades could not furnish the like. Foundations are yet firm where all else is fallen; there are strong remnants of an ancient wall built of long bevelled stones, with bastions, along the edge of a ravine; a gate, and part of a wall yet stand, in which are imbedded many pieces of granite columns, the index of older ruins. A long space extending a mile or more from the village is now overspread with ruins, among which, if searched for in the adjoining wood, where no wall any longer stands, are found many architectural fragments, and prostrate columns and fallen altars. The historical and predicted fact is amply corroborated on the spot, that *destruction has come upon destruction*, till nothing be left but memorials that it has done its work on one of the richest cities of the land. Burckhardt described Paneas as containing, in 1810, "about a hundred and fifty houses, inhabited by Turks, Greeks, Druses," &c. In 1844, they were reduced to about twenty houses, little else than miserable huts, loosely constructed with stones from the ruins. Yet no natural cause exists why a city, whose name did honour to both an emperor and a tetrarch, should not

¹ Robinson and Smith, iii. p. 59.

be as populous and prosperous as ever. There the Jordan, in its primary source, rising beside a spacious cavern in a limestone rock, gushes to the width of a hundred and eighty feet from among loose stones at its base, and in the space of a few yards beneath forms a shallow stream of equal breadth, as if it flowed at once a river from a rock. Stones covered with aquatic plants, speedily divide it for a while into lesser streams, that in a soil so fertile, a climate so delicious, and a spot so picturesque, might irrigate a paradise or enrich a city. Desolate—and all but deserted—as Cæsarea Philippi is, many olives, figs, pomegranates, and vines, often intertwined, adorn and enrich a bold ravine, down which the river leaps, and other circumjacent valleys, in which too luxuriant myrtles, woodbines, holly, oleander, mint, thyme, and passion flowers, combine their fragrance and their beauty. Cataracts, in some places, may be heard when they cannot be seen, from the closeness of the trees and the density of the foliage. The beauties of nature flourish amidst the ruins of art; and a magnificent terebinth-tree, the trunk of which is thirteen feet eight inches in circumference, still stands in the humble village. The principal part of the ancient city seems to have been, as Burekhardt states, on the opposite side of the river, now destitute of houses, and of standing though ruined walls, but covered for a large space with old foundations and heaps of hewn stones, which are overspread with thistles and shadowed by trees. Philip the tetrarch did not build his capital, nor Herod his, that in after ages their proud and joyous cities might illustrate the power of another word than their own. But sharing in the common doom of the cities of the land, of the one and of the other as of the rest it is now true as written for generations to come, *Yet the defenced city—as those cities were—shall be desolate, and the habitation forsaken, and left like a wilderness: there shall the calf feed,*

*and there shall he lie down and consume the branches thereof.*¹

But on the east no less than on the west of the Jordan, the once famous as well as numerous cities that were situated there, proclaim the truth of the word that alike went forth against them. Bashan pertained to Israel as well as Carmel, and Gilead no less than Ephraim; and a promise yet unfulfilled still substantiates the claim. The *cities of the plain* of Bashan (or the Hauran) were the *possession* of one half of the tribe of Manasseh, as were those of the plain of Sharon of the other. And two tribes besides had their *inheritance* there.

East of that river—where the conquests of the Israelites began, and where the Jews retained no mean portion of their territory, till finally dispersed by the Romans when Jerusalem was destroyed,—the land, as well as on the western side, is studded all over with joint illustrations of Scriptural history and prophecy, both where Israelites of old did dwell, and where their enemies subsisted as *thorns in their sides*.

Numerous were the cities of the Israelites beyond Jordan. So soon as they began to possess the land they took *all the cities* of Sihon, king of the Amorites, from Aroer, which is by the brink of the river Arnon; and from the city that is by the river, even unto Gilead, there was not one city too strong for them: the Lord their God delivered all into their hands. Great was their triumph when, at the battle of Edrei, the king of Bashan was smitten before Israel, and his kingdom became a portion of their inheritance. There was not a city which they took not,—*threescore cities fenced with high walls, gates, and bars*. From the king of Bashan and the king of the Amorites they took all the land “from the

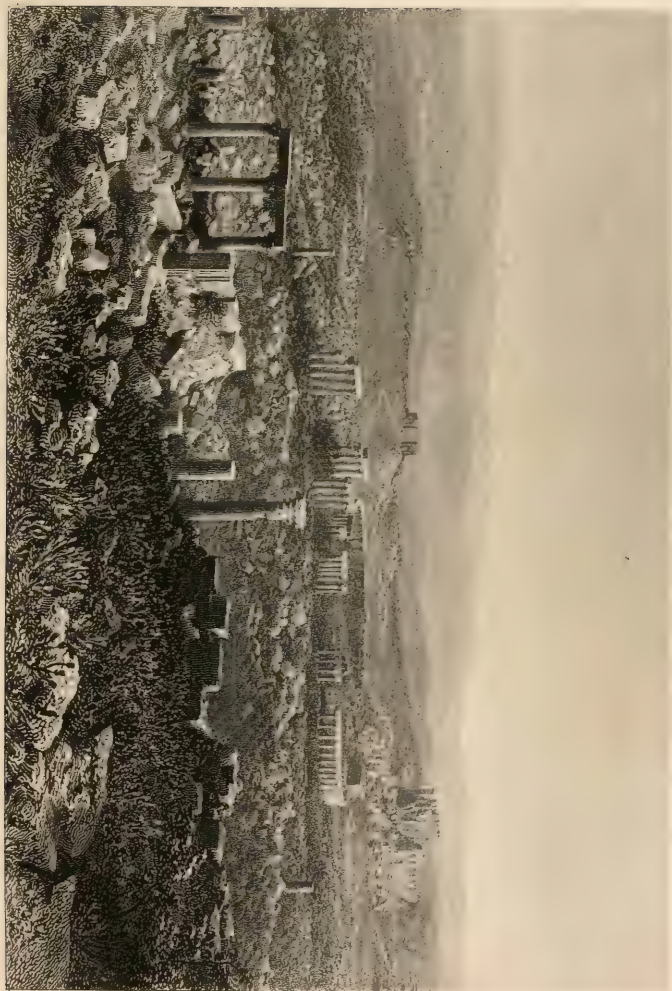
¹ Isa. xxvii. 10.

river of Arnon unto mount Hermon, *all the cities of the plain*, and all Gilead and Bashan unto Salcah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Bashan.”¹ These territories are defined, as indubitably marked by the same natural boundaries to this day. In full and literal accomplishment of a prediction and a promise, the conquest of all these cities was complete. They became the prey and the possession of the children of Israel; and they dwelt in them. But as complete is their predicted desolation or desertion now. And as it was said in truth unto Moses, “I will deliver the king of Bashan, and all his people, and his land, into thy hand,” (Deut. iii. 2,) so truly has the word of the Lord by Moses and the prophets been accomplished, *I will make your cities waste.—Your cities shall be made waste without an inhabitant.—The cities of Aroer are forsaken; they shall be for flocks which shall lie down, and none shall make them afraid.—In that day shall the strong cities be as a forsaken bough. The defenced cities shall be desolate, and the habitation forsaken, and left like a wilderness, &c.*

The record of the curse that has not fallen “causeless,” may be as brief as the Scriptural record of the accomplishment of the promise, when their primary occupancy of these very cities was the earnest of still larger blessings to Israel’s tribes.

Within the precisely defined regions of these royalties then, but desolations now, from the river Arnon to mount Hermon, (exclusive of Ammon and Moab, or places to the east or south of As-Salt,) there were in the year 1834, as their names are given in Smith’s Arabic lists, *three hundred and forty-five places “in ruins or deserted.”* The proof is thus plain that, as to the Scriptural record, besides the threescore cities, there were “unwalled towns a great many;” and the evidence is thus abundant and precise, that

¹ Deut. iii. 1-13.



these cities are desolate or in ruins, or else deserted or *without inhabitant*.

But large as this number is, it comprehends not all the ruined or *forsaken* cities or towns, with which this region is so thickly studded. The author, while in Palestine, was informed by Dr (then Mr) Eli Smith, who has traversed at different times great part of Syria, and obtained the names in the separate localities, that his lists were not complete; and that on both sides of the Jordan, places previously inhabited were then deserted, (in 1844.) The stroke that has continued for ages upon the land has not yet ceased. Ancient towns that retained a village population twelve or even two years ago, now bear the emphatic name *charab*. Though unable to penetrate farther than Gerash, the writer, in passing over Ajlun (or mount Gilead,) took down from natives of the country the names of seventeen places, marked in Dr Smith's lists as inhabited, in which *no man* any longer *dwelt*. And from many more in the Hauran the inhabitants have since been driven out by the Bedouins, who live not in *houses* but in tents.

The very term, in the Hebrew original, of that denunciation which has fallen thus heavily upon the cities of Israel, is unconsciously repeated in their cognate language by the native Arabs, as descriptive of places now inhabited no more. In questioning many of them, in different localities on both sides of the Jordan, concerning such sites, we heard uniformly the same word from their lips, repeatedly by several of them at the same moment: and places formerly inhabited were declared to be *charab*, desolate.¹

Ibrahim Pasha, after an "exterminating war" in the Hauran, by the terror of his name controlled the Bedouins, or incorporated them in his armies. When European policy and arms gave anew to the Sultan the *nominal* sovereignty

¹ Lev. xxvi. עָרָב Lev. xxvi. 31, 33. Isa. lxi. 4. Ezek. vi. 6; xxvi. 35, 38, &c.

of Syria, an Osmanli governor in Turkish infatuation was set over the Hauran. But he was speedily compelled to abandon it to the Bedouins. So entirely had they overspread the country, after defeating the troops of the Pasha of Damascus in 1844, that though we watched for an opening, it was then impossible for us to penetrate it, either on the west or on the north; and after passing through ten thousand war-camels, about twelve miles from Damascus, a cloud of dust in the distance, raised by the seeming advance of a hostile tribe, so intimidated the guides or guards that accompanied us, that, without a word of warning, they fled, driving before them the mule that, with other articles, carried the plates, on which we hoped to transfer the views of some of the desolate ruins or deserted cities of that stricken region. In the following year, as stated in a letter from Damascus, the Bedouins came like hungry wolves upon the villages of the Hauran, so that there was hardly one remaining.¹ In that land a "treaty of peace" is often but a short and uncertain truce; and respite from war is now unknown in that still troubled country. Vain were the attempt to draw from the testimonies of travellers a precise estimate of the *existing* loneliness of these once populous and crowded cities, or to say what villages or *houses* are not now—or may not be to-morrow—bereft of the last *man* that lingered within them. But there is ample proof how numerous and great, and densely peopled these cities were, which had first to be *in ruins*, as many are, or else *deserted*, as their respective designations (without any reference to the prediction) bear, before they could thus jointly testify, that each word which fell on them of old, was that of the Lord.

Cities are desolate without inhabitant, and houses without man, though the cities remain, and the houses in many

¹ Free Church Missionary Record, vol. ii. 253. Letter from Rev. Mr Graham.



instances are yet "entire," while the once splendid capital of Herod levelled with the dust, has only its holes for reptiles and wild beasts; and more modern towns built by triumphant Romans in their Syrian provinces, are strewed upon the ground, and, covered with *briers, or thorns, or thistles*, take the lowest place among the *desolate cities* to be raised from *their foundations*.

The mere number, however vast, of "places in ruins or deserted," inadequately represents either the extent of the desolation, or the import of their doom, as actually realized. As the desolation or abandonment of these cities is somewhat more minutely regarded, the verification of the prophetic word rises more clearly and wonderfully into view; and may here again, in one instance at least, be an object of sight.

Assyrian arts, long lost, and sometimes ignorantly despised, are no longer wholly hid, when specimens of them, dug from the ruins of Nineveh may now be seen in national museums in Paris and in London. And records of antiquity give no note of the splendour which once dazzled the now lonely spot of Gerash, like that which, by a modern invention, the sun's rays now reflect on a daguerreotype plate from its ruins. The stateliest of its edifices, now its monuments, are the only memorials of its greatness.

Its walls, from three to four miles in circumference, inclose an area covered all over with ruins. Without a house that is not levelled with the ground and overspread with thistles, two theatres, ranking among the most entire of its ruins, bear witness that Gerasa was once a *joyous city*. Of one of these, the semicircular seats, formed for its gay inhabitants, may, on a minute inspection, be partly seen on the upper edge of the plate, near the massy ruins of a magnificent temple, facing the empty niches in its broken walls. In the theatre are twenty-eight rows of seats, the uppermost of which is about a hundred and twenty paces in circuit.

The walls of the temple, fully eight feet thick, built by Romans to last for ages, were surrounded by a Corinthian peristyle of many columns, the once lofty shafts of which now lie in immense heaps around its base. Fronting the theatre there stood, as there now lies, a street lined on both sides with columns, which bisected the city to its opposite extremity, and terminated in a semicircular colonnade that opened at once to the temple and the theatre. It was crossed by similar streets of which some of the columns are still erect, amidst remaining foundations, broken walls, and heaps of ruins. The lines of columns, crossed at right angles by others, once closely ranged, may yet be seen as the chief street traversed the city now buried in its ruins. The pavement of the streets, seldom equalled in modern capitals, is in many places as perfect as when foot-passengers thronged the paths on both sides, and chariots passed between them. The south-western gateway, as seen near the centre of the plate, was not built, as now it stands, to lead to a desolate city *without an inhabitant*. Many arched chambers, some of very large dimensions, have now become fit tenements for reptiles and wild beasts. Another temple, built on a spacious area, closely lined by two hundred pillars, now fallen, was adorned in front by columns that, still standing together, may challenge competition with the ornaments of a modern city, though it be not, as Gerasa was, a mere provincial town. Discovered, like the city, in 1806, they stand after many generations to testify that cities in the land of Israel built by *strangers*, which could vie with each other in their greatness, and give its name to the region, have yet, however desolate, something to show what they were; though, according to the word of the Lord, not one citizen is left to boast of them now, and none can claim these princely columns, grand streets, and noble ruins, as their own. The gods for whose honour these temples were built are gone;



as true it is that the Lord *will famish all the gods of the earth*. But though temples decay and cities fall, His word *abideth for ever*. And were the predicted time come, and the covenanted people there, easy were the task,—without hewing a stone,—for *the sons of strangers to build up the walls* of the fallen Gerasa.

Burekhardt's pages contain as minute a description as passing visits, during two tours in the Hauran, in the years 1810 and 1812, could supply, of many of the ancient cities east of the Jordan, whether they then retained a village population, or were abandoned by their inhabitants, or reduced to ruins. Mr Buckingham travelled in the Hauran in 1816: Mr G. Robinson, accompanied by Captain (now Colonel) Chesney, in 1830; and Lord Lindsay in 1837, and, more recently, Mr Porter in 1853, and Mr Cyril C. Graham in 1857. They all testify how numerous are the ruined or deserted cities in the lands of Gilead and Bashan. These regions, the reputed fertility and ancient populousness of which, sceptics down to the present day might have held in *derision* without a challenge,—now at last vindicate the most ancient record of conquests that long preceded the siege of Troy, and disclose to view *cities without inhabitant, and houses without man, habitations forsaken and left like a wilderness*; yet such that, where in ruins, they can be raised again from their foundations, or be *repaired to dwell in*, and such, where *deserted*, that it may be said of them, in yet unaccomplished promises, to the *ancient people, Turn again, O virgin of Israel, turn again to these thy cities*.

On an isolated hill, to the east of the lake of Tiberias, extensive ruins of buildings and walls, quantities of polished stone and prostrate columns, now called El Hossn, are conjectured by Burekhardt to be the remains of the ancient town of Regaba or *Argob*, and by some also to occupy the site of the more modern town of *Gadara*. At *Oom Keis*,

now also tenantless, are the remains of two theatres, immense heaps of hewn stones, and lines of fallen columns that mark a once colonnaded street, like that of Gerash, supposed to be the site of the Jewish city of *Gamala*, that for a time withstood Vespasian and Titus. The ruins of Draa or *Edrei*, are two miles and a half in circuit. "The town of Szalkhat, or *Salcah*, contains upwards of eight hundred houses; but it is now uninhabited."¹—The circuit of the ancient city of Kanout, or *Kenath*, is about two miles and a half or three miles. Paved streets and courts, large apartments, and smaller vaulted rooms, still entire in spacious edifices, several towers, and upwards of forty columns still erect, some of which rank among the finest in Syria, a large building in ruins, apparently a church, beside another seemingly a monastery,—denote no ignoble city;² while the whole ground upon which the ruined habitations stand, overgrown with oak-trees, and streets that hide the ruins, shows, like the sites of many cities besides, that *the defenced city is desolate, and the habitation forsaken, and left like a wilderness; there shall the calf feed, and there shall he lie down and consume the branches thereof*. In the seventh century, on the invasion of the Saracens, the populous city of Bosra, as Gibbon relates, could send forth from its gates twelve thousand horse. In the twelfth, when treachery had failed, an army of Crusaders dared not assault it. Its thick walls, about three miles in circuit, are still in some places almost perfect. They are now, for the most part, an enclosure of ruins, which spread also beyond them. The principal ruin is that of a temple, in front of which are four large Corinthian columns, upwards of forty-five feet in height. Others are still erect; and many are scattered in all directions. Two triumphal arches still stand, as if in mockery of the fallen and *forsaken*

¹ Burekhardt, p. 100.² Ibid. p. 83–86.

city. *Ezra*, the ancient *Zavara*, once a flourishing city, is between three and four miles in circumference. "The ancient buildings," says Burckhardt, "in consequence of the strength and solidity of their walls, are, for the greater part, in complete preservation." "We walked," says Lord Lindsay, "through several streets of houses seemingly in good repair, and almost all untenanted." From the top of a large unoccupied house, "which is quite perfect, and carpeted with grass, he saw the roofs of numberless smaller houses, quite entire, and just as green."¹ "In many places are two or three arched chambers, one above the other, forming so many stories. This substantial mode of building prevails also in most of the ancient public edifices remaining in the Haouran," &c.

But throughout the same region, in the hills and plains of Gilead and Bashan, many ancient but now deserted or ruined cities, besides those whose names are recorded in Scripture or in history, equally illustrate the truth of the prophetic word, as it passed alike upon all. *Shaara*, once a considerable city, and a well-peopled village after the commencement of the present century, has since been "abandoned" or *forsaken*, though "most of the houses in the town are in good preservation."² *Missemā*, a ruined town, three miles in circuit, "has no inhabitant,"³ *Dhami*, or *Dama*, "may contain three hundred houses, most of which are still in good preservation."⁴ It now ranks among deserted places; as does also *Kuffer*, thus described by Burckhardt: "Kuffer was once a considerable town. It is built in the usual style of this country, entirely of stone, most of the houses are still entire; the doors are uniformly of stone, and even the gates of the town, between nine and ten feet high, are of a single piece of stone. On

¹ Lord Lindsay's *Travels*, vol. ii. p. 160.

² Robinson's *Travels*, vol. ii. pp. 135, 136. Burckhardt, p. 114.

³ Burckhardt, pp. 115, 116.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 111.

each side of the streets is a foot pavement two feet and a half broad, and raised one foot above the level of the street itself, which is seldom more than one yard in width. The town is three-quarters of an hour in circumference, and, being built on a declivity, a person may walk on it upon the flat roofs of the houses," &c.¹ "At *Ayoun* are about four hundred houses without any inhabitant."² At the distance of five miles, in the deserted region in the vicinity of *Salcah*, stands *Oerman*, an ancient city, somewhat larger than *Ayoun*.³ For a similar distance the intermediate country is full of ruined walls to *Szalkhat*, distant from which, about ten miles, is the deserted city of *Kereye* (*Kerioth*), which has several ancient towers and public buildings, and "contains about five hundred houses."⁴ "My guides," says *Burckhardt*, were "afraid of prolonging their stay in these *desert parts*."⁵ The vision of *Isaiah*, and of other prophets, is realized. The time is come in which the cities *are desolate without inhabitant, and the houses without man*; and the defenced city is desolate, and the habitation *forsaken*, and left *like a wilderness*. "Desert parts," is the appropriate descriptive designation of a region, than which perhaps none on earth—scarcely excepting *China*, in *Mr Buckingham's* estimation—was ever more thickly studded with cities, and of cities compactly built together, than which perhaps none were ever more crowded with inhabitants.

"We all knew," says *Mr Porter*, "that we were now not merely beyond the bounds of civilization, but also of habitation; and that this very city (*Salcah*) had at a comparatively recent period been deserted by its inhabitants in consequence of the attacks of the wild sons of the desert, who acknowledge no power but that of the sword. . . . The greater part of the exterior walls (of the castle) is still in good

¹ *Burckhardt*, p. 90, 91.

² *Ibid.* p. 97.

³ *Ibid.* p. 97.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 103.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 99.

repair—the outer wall of the moat, or counterscarp, is a perfect circle, whose circumference I estimated at half a mile. From the summit of this noble castle, I obtained an extensive and interesting view, and was able to take in at a glance the whole features of the surrounding country, which lay spread out around me like a vast panorama. . . . The whole country from the south-west is an elevated undulating plain, dotted with *many deserted towns* and occasional conical tells. Immediately beneath Sulkhad the eastern ridge sinks down into a plain, in which are several deserted villages, and the traces of fields and gardens. South by west, nearly an hour distant, is a lofty *tell* with a deserted town on its eastern slope. . . . Due south there is a slight depression in the plain, with a gentle swell on each side, running as far as the eye can see in a straight line. In it I noticed *several ruined or deserted towns and large villages*. . . . On the plain extending from the south to the east, I counted fourteen towns or large villages, none of them more than twelve miles distant, and almost all of them, so far as I could see with the aid of a telescope, still habitable, like Sulkhad, but completely deserted. The houses in some of them I could distinctly see standing perfect as when recently finished; and these strange square towers, so conspicuous in all the ancient villages of the Haurân, are here too.”¹—“Lists of *more than a hundred* ruined cities and villages in these mountains alone I had tested and found correct, though not complete.”²

“Of the numerous towns on the eastern border of the Lejah,” writes Mr Cyril Graham, “there is only one north of Shuhba which is inhabited. The general appearance of them all is precisely the same. Every house is built of the black basalt with which that country so abounds. Many

¹ Five Years in Damascus by the Rev. J. L. Porter, vol. ii. p. 181-183.

² Ibid. vol. ii. p. 206.

of the houses are in so perfect a state that they might be inhabited again to-morrow." "We rode to *Kureiyeh*, the ancient Kerioth, and thence started on our journey amongst the ruined towns east of Salkhad. We went out a party of fourteen,—the chief, eleven Druzes, my servant, and myself. We came successively to many old towns—Hâb, Um-er-Rumân, a very fine old place, with a very handsome tower, but without inscription; and near here we were charged by a large body of our enemies, the Arabs es Arhan; but they, not liking the appearance of our fire-arms, retreated. We presently came upon that old road which leads across the desert from Salcah to Bozrah on the Tigris; and under some low hills, called Tellûl el Hosn, I found a town, which probably formed a station on this road. I heartily wished to follow it some way, but there were many obstacles which could not be surmounted. . . . Of the remaining towns which I saw on this journey which were of particular interest, I should mention 'Ormân, which, from some Greek inscriptions on the walls of a public building, is identified with the ancient *Philopoppolis* (it was visited before only by Burckhardt), and *Malah*, a very beautiful town, east of 'Ormân. Both at 'Ormân and Malah there are several of those remarkable square towers I have alluded to. At Malah there are as many as five, and at 'Ormân four. After spending five days in the desert in this journey from Kureiyeh, I returned by Salkhad along the eastern side of the mountains to near *Seberet el Khudr*, so as to complete my inspection of the eastern side of the Druz mountain. Many very old places lay in my path,—Aqûn, Kaus, Kuweizis, &c. The whole portion which I had travelled south of Bozrah and east of Salkhad was new ground. Before turning away from Salcah, I should like," continues Mr Graham, "to make a few general remarks on a country once so thickly peopled, and now marked as a desert on our

maps. That the towns lying in this country, like all those of Bashan, are of the highest antiquity, I think there cannot be a doubt. These are the cities which the Israelites took from Og.

“Suppose for a moment that no one had ever travelled in the Haurân; on reading the different passages in the Old Testament which refer to that country, should we not, when we found the account of such prodigious numbers of stone cities, expect to find at least some remnant of them now? And when we read in Deuteronomy of “threescore walled towns, and unwalled towns a great number,” and see how small a space Og’s kingdom occupies on the map, we almost feel tempted, as many have been, to think that some mistake with regard to the numbers of these places has crept in. But when we go to the very country, and find one after another great stone cities, walled and unwalled, with stone gates, and so *crowded* together that it becomes almost a matter of wonder how all the people could have lived in so small a space,—when we see houses built of such huge and massive stones that no force which can be brought against them in that country could ever batter them down,—when we find rooms in these houses so large and lofty that many of them would be considered fine rooms in a palace in Europe,—and, lastly, when we find some of these towns bearing the very names which cities in that very country bore before the Israelites came out of Egypt, I think we cannot help feeling the strongest conviction that we have before us the cities of the Rephaim (giants), the cities [in a later age of part] of the land of Moab. These have become gradually deserted as the Arabs of the desert increase in number, and now south of Salkhad not one of these many towns is inhabited. It is worthy of notice how many crosses are seen on the houses in these towns. Everywhere in the Haurân you find crosses, but nowhere in such

numbers as in the towns I have described. These were cities belonging to Aretas, king of Arabia; here Paul first preached," &c.¹

A recent traveller, who partly traversed the western side of the Hauran, thus records his testimony concerning the desolated and deserted cities which he saw: "Nowa, the ancient Neva,—like Sananein, and other towns and villages in the road, is a heap of ruins. Population seems to have decreased from thousands to hundreds, and from hundreds to decades: what were once cities of considerable magnitude are now wretched villages: and *large towns have not a single tenant* to perpetuate the memory of their name. From Nowa to Feek the road crosses a vast plain destitute of cultivation and inhabitants. Nothing is seen but the ruin of *tenantless villages and towns* scattered in every direction, with multitudes of hawks and herons occupying the spots *deserted by man*."²

In prefacing his lists of names of places in the Hauran, Dr Smith states that, "respecting the whole, it is necessary to observe that the inhabitants so often move from village to village, that the fact of a village having been inhabited when we were there, is no evidence that it is so at the present time." There are other cities besides the tenantless places already specified that demand a passing notice, though they retained a village population when last visited by any European traveller.

Its remaining town walls, nearly four miles in circumference, which may be traced all round the city, and are in many places perfect, and the loftiness of its public edifices, attest that *Shohba* was formerly one of the chief cities of these districts.³ Eight gates of the city, each formed of two arches, a large edifice in the form of a crescent, with several

¹ See below chap. vii. Moab.

² Travels by C. B. Elliott, vol. ii. pp. 325, 327.

³ Burckhardt, p. 70. Robinson.

niches in the front; and another, of a square form, built of massy stones, with a spacious gate, and a double range of vaults, one above the other; a theatre in good preservation, now "the principal curiosity" of the city, enclosed by a wall ten feet in thickness, with upper and lower chambers, and ten rows of seats, of which the uppermost is sixty-four paces in circuit; and the remains of an aqueduct—of which some of the few arches left are upwards of forty feet in height—that terminates in a spacious bath; well-paved streets, the chief of which is doubly lined with ruined habitations; and the doors of most of the houses formed of a single slab of stone, with stone hinges,—indicate a *walled city* with gates and bars not originally designed though destined to be a Druse village in a country where, as now recorded concerning it, "the tenure of property is so uncertain, that shops and bazars are not to be found."—*Soueida* was formerly one of the largest cities in the Hauran; the circuit of its ruins is at least four miles; among them is a street running in a straight line, in which the houses on both sides are still standing. "I was twelve minutes," says Burckhardt, "in walking from one end to the other. A large building in ruins, with many broken pillars, seems to have been a church."

The city of Zaele, half a mile in circuit, is in summer a much frequented watering-place of the Arabs. "The great desert extends to the north-north-east and south-east of Zaele; to the distance of three days' journey eastward, there is still a good arable soil, intersected with numerous tels or hillocks, and covered with the ruins of so many cities and villages, that, as I was informed," says Burckhardt, "in whatever direction it is crossed, the traveller is sure to pass, every day, five or six of these ruined places."¹ "The great Syrian desert and its borders are not a bare

¹ Burckhardt, p. 94.

wide waste of sand. Its surface consists generally of a fine black soil, covered in winter with long lank grass and herbs, and peopled with antelopes, *wild asses, and boars.*"¹ *The multitude of the city shall be left; the forts and towers shall be for dens for ever, a joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks.*

Of Syria, in general, Volney states that "there are prodigious quantities of ruins dispersed over the plains, and even in the mountains, at this day *deserted.*"² "Above all other countries in the world," says Mr Stanley, "Palestine is a *land of ruins (sic)*. It is not that the particular ruins are on a scale equal to those of Greece or Italy, still less to those of Egypt. But there is no country in which they are so numerous, none in which they bear so large a proportion to the villages and towns still in existence. In Judea it is hardly an exaggeration to say, that whilst for miles and miles there is no appearance of present life or habitation, except the occasional goat-herd on the hill-side, or gathering of women at wells, there is hardly a hill-top of the many within sight which is not covered by the vestiges of some fortress or city of former ages. Sometimes they are fragments of ancient walls, sometimes mere foundations and piles of stone, but always enough to indicate signs of human habitation and civilization. Such is the case in Western Palestine [*the decayed places of Judah*]. In Eastern Palestine, and still more if we include the Hauran and the Lebanon, the same picture is continued, although under a somewhat different aspect. Here the ancient cities remain, in like manner deserted, ruined, but standing; not mere masses and large heaps of stone, but towns and houses, in amount and in a state of preservation which have no parallel except in the cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii,

¹ Malte-Brune and Balbi's Geography, p. 640.

² Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 363.

buried under the eruption of Vesuvius. Not even in Rome or Athens, hardly in Egyptian Thebes, can ancient buildings be found in such magnitude and profusion as at Baalbec, Jerash, and Palmyra. But the general fact of the ruins of Palestine, whether erect or fallen, remains common to the whole country," &c.¹

Words in any book on any subject cannot be more explicit or express than those which, in the Book of the Lord, connect the desolation or desertion of the cities of Israel with the long-continued dispersion and blindness of the people Israel. Many nations have taken to themselves the name of Christian for many centuries, while *the Jews*,—of whom Jesus was, and of whom he said *salvation is*,—as a people, still disown and disbelieve in Christ as the Messiah; *till* the cities of their own land are desolate without inhabitant, and the houses without man; and the desertion of the cities of Bashan, which, in the days of Isaiah, as in those of Joshua, were cities of Israel, is in the present day progressively advancing from year to year. To him that hath an ear to hear, the time is still manifestly future, for the time is not yet, of which *it is written*, "Thy people shall be all righteous: *they shall inherit the land for ever*, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified." Then "they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations."² These prophecies, and many more, as every reader and believer of the sure word of prophecy knows, are not to be cast back to the dark and troublous days of Ezra, nor limited to any times that are past. They are facts in the present day, which have for their witnesses Volney and Stanley, as well as every other traveller who has visited that land of ruins, or seen the forsaken cities

¹ Syria and Palestine, p. 118, 119.

² Isaiah lx. 21; lxi. 4.

which once were Israel's. There are old wastes; there are former desolations; there are waste cities; there are cities without inhabitant, and houses without man; there are *heaps* of ruins to be raised up again; prostrate cities, with their paved streets and solid foundations, lying as they fell, to be built up again; there are partly ruined cities to be repaired again; and empty or forsaken cities, with every house and street entire, waiting for the time when they shall be filled with men.

“The palaces shall be forsaken; the multitude of the city shall be left; *the forts and towers shall be for dens for ever*—UNTIL the Spirit be poured upon us from on high . . . and the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever,” &c.¹ *The fortress shall cease from Ephraim.*² Palestine, on both sides of the Jordan, was anciently a land of walled towns, fortresses, castles, and towers, which now, together with unwalled towns of old, combine to render it a land of ruins. But though the word was the word of the Lord, the work was not the work of a day. Even after the desolating wars of the Crusades, down to the fourteenth century, Syria contained thirty fortresses.³ In unconscious confirmation of the prophecy, Volney testifies that “every step we meet with ruins of *towers, dungeons, and castles, with fosses*—frequently *inhabited by jackals, owls, and scorpions.*”⁴ When towers have fallen, the arches on which they were built remain, and, like natural cavities in a rock, they are now *for dens*. And where they still stand, as in many deserted cities east of the Jordan, they are open to wild beasts, and serve them for shade or for shelter, when they have *ceased* to be the defences of *habitations now for-*

¹ Isa. xxxii. 14–17.

² Isa. xvii. 3.

³ Abulfeda, Tab. Syria, p. 169.

⁴ Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 336.

saken by men. Kanouat, Oerman, Bethgamul, and many other forsaken cities, have still their now useless towers. Among other ruined castles the name of that of *Baldwin* tells of its strength eighteen centuries after the days of Isaiah, while its ruins show that it has *ceased*. The wall of the castle of *Salcah*, nearly half a mile in circumference, is flanked all round with towers and turrets. It long withstood a hard pressed siege by the Sultan of Egypt in the fourteenth century. Stones of sixty and eighty-six pounds-weight were then thrown against it from machines, one of which was transported thither in separate parts on two hundred camels. Parts of the wall are now fallen, and in many places fill to half its depth the moat by which it was surrounded. The populous city of *Bozrah*, in the seventh century, was secure at least from a surprise, by the solid structure of its walls; and could then send forth from its gates twelve thousand horse. These walls are now broken. At the time of Burckhardt's visit in 1812, its castle was garrisoned by six Arab soldiers,¹ and has now ceased to be a defence against the Bedouins, who are masters of the plain of Bashan, and whose battle-fields are plains. The *castle of Adjloun*, about four hundred paces in circuit, may be almost said to be in ruins.²

On the west, as on the east of the Jordan, fortresses have ceased from the land, and are now defenceless ruins, from the desert of the Euphrates to the shores of the Mediterranean. M. Van de Velde "spent fully two hours among the ruins" of the fortress of *Masada*. "And such a fortress!" he exclaims; "provided not only with a palace and towers, with rain-tanks and subterranean magazines, but even with a layer of soil, on which, in case of need, a besieged force might raise their own grain! *Masada's* houses and palaces lie prostrate; the rain-tanks are destroyed, the fortified wall

¹ Burckhardt, p. 233.

² Buckingham, p. 157.

is broken down. . . . Masada has now remained for many centuries waste and uninhabited.”¹ *Athlita*, on the coast, is the *castrum Pelegrinorum*, or Castel Pelegrino, a strong citadel in the days of the Crusades. Its remains still manifest its strength in ancient times. Though less lofty than the walls once were, the east end and north-west corner of the walls of a church, now form the most conspicuous object in the centre of the principal ruins above which they tower. The interior of the church is filled with ruins, miserable huts, and heaps of dung. The scene all around is a mass of ruins, intermixed with hovels covered with earth. The wall which projects on the south-west point towards the sea, is very firmly built of large hewn stones, and is nine feet wide ; a tower at its termination had partly fallen in a storm two days before that in which the daguerreotype view was taken, and we were told that the opposite side fell two years previously. Time is still continuing its ravages on the ruins ; and the destructive hand of man has been also at work. Between the point, where the shadow of the church, as seen in the water, and the shore, a small rude quay has been formed at the foot of the outer wall for shipping the hewn stones of which it and the other walls are formed ; and many were transported to Acre by Ibrahim Pasha, and subsequently by its Turkish governor. Some remains of two walls may be seen in the plate. But from remnants of each in various places, the fortress appears to have been surrounded by three strong walls besides the external wall. The loftiest ruin is the fragment of an inner wall, nearly a hundred feet in height. The fortress, like every other in the land, has ceased : and though inferior in magnitude and strength to others, its remains still testify that mighty bulwarks have fallen before the word of the Lord.

The *castle of Paneas* was one of the strongest fortresses of

¹ Syria and Palestine, vol. ii. p. 103-105.



Syria in the time of the Crusades, when it repeatedly resisted and repelled powerful armies. It was strong by nature as by art—a choice station for a citadel on the oblong summit of a hill. The traveller, as the writer can testify, now passes unchallenged and undisturbed over its solitary but very extensive ruins. They are utterly desolate and defenceless. Every building is unroofed, and most of the walls are broken down. The most entire are those on the highest point, which are still large and strong, and firmly built of bevelled stone. Hewn stones lie in heaps in various places throughout the ruins, and are spread around the sides of the hill. It was encompassed by a wall ten feet in thickness, flanked with numerous towers, and fully a mile in circumference, or twenty-five minutes as thus measured by Burckhardt. For many ages after the prophecy it was not destined for *dens*, for which it is well adapted now. There are many apartments and recesses in the castle. “At both the western corners runs a succession of dark strongly built low apartments, like cells, vaulted, and with small narrow loop-holes, as if for musketry. It must certainly,” says Burckhardt, “have been a very *strong hold* to those who possessed it.”¹ *Thou hast brought his strongholds to ruin.* “High on the rocky slopes above the town (of Paneas) still lingers the name of *Hazor*, in the earliest times the capital of Northern Palestine. Hard by this height of Hazor is the *castle of Shubeibeh* (Paneas), the largest of its kind in the East, and equal in extent even to the pride of European castles at Heidelberg.”²

Of *Tabaria*, or the modern *Tiberias*, Burckhardt wrote, “The town is surrounded towards the land by a thick and well-built wall, about twenty feet in height, with a high parapet and loop-holes. It surrounds the city on three sides, and touches the water at its two extremities. The

¹ Burckhardt's Syria, p. 37.

² Stanley, p. 389.

town-wall is flanked by twenty round towers standing at unequal distances. Both towns and walls are built with black stones of moderate size, and seem to be the work of not very remote times; the whole being in a good state of repair, the place may be considered as almost impregnable to Syrian soldiers."¹ In different ages, built and rebuilt as many of the towns and fortresses of the land of Israel have been, they have not only been successively destroyed by foreign invaders and hostile armies, but, more immediately and terribly, many of them have been repeatedly overthrown by earthquakes. Again and again the cities and strongholds of Palestine have been thus shattered or levelled, as if the hand of the Lord had itself been put forth in the accomplishment of his word. Like Paneas, and many strongholds besides, Tiberias pertained to Ephraim, from which the fortresses were expressly to cease. In 1837, Tiberias, together with its walls, was destroyed by an earthquake. In the following year, "the prostrate walls of the town presented little more than heaps of ruins." Some of the wide breaches in the western wall have since been partly filled with stones loosely put up, which the hand could again lay in heaps upon the ground. And on the south, instead of a barrier impregnable by Syrian soldiers, the only pathway to the huts that have been built upon the ruins of the city, is over the prostrate wall, trodden under foot by men and beasts.

The castle and town of *Safed* were completely overthrown in the same earthquake in which Tiberias fell. The castle equalled in strength and extent that of Paneas; and the ruin is as entire. "It was anciently surrounded by stupendous works, moats, bulwarks, towers." In the beginning of last century, as stated by Van Egmont and Heyman, the thickness of the wall and of the corridor, or covered passages,

¹ Burckhardt's Syria, pp. 320, 321.

which extended round them, was twenty paces. It was the residence of a governor till levelled by the earthquake. It is now utterly destroyed; but its ruins would supply materials for the construction of a town.—The spacious top of Mount Tabor was fortified by Josephus. The remains of a large fortress are yet seen amidst its thickets. “A thick wall,” as Burekhardt relates, “may be traced quite round the summit; on several parts of it are the remains of bastions.” Many arches are yet unbroken, covering vaulted chambers, some of which are very large. This fortress, besieged like all others in the land, could not resist the power of the Romans; but arched chambers of its towers, level with the ground, or overgrown with wood, are still for dens, where wild boars and other wild animals abound. Not a man lives near it, though its fertile summit is covered with foundations of walls, and heaps of hewn stones, where foxes have their holes, and wild beasts their dens.

Whether on the tops of mountains or in the plains, in inland regions or on the sea-shore, the fortresses of the land are now strong in nothing but in illustration of the word of the Lord of Hosts to whom power belongs. Foes often severally possessed them of old; and for ages they were scenes of ceaseless encounters, and not unfrequently of sieges for months or for years. Many a city were the strongholds of Palestine erected to secure; and many an assailant did they defy. Each believer may now appropriate them; and what they were not in war they may prove in argument, impregnable and unassailable in defence of that word which now stamps them as its own, and which, through the Spirit that laid on them their *burdens* which brought them to ruin, is mighty to the pulling down of greater strongholds than were they.

At the base of the mountains of Samaria “lie the huge tells (heaps) of Kaimun, el-Lejjun, and Tannuk, marking

the spots, where in times of old, stood the key-fortresses of the mountains of Ephraim, and also of the plain of Esdraelon."¹ "I saw a huge tell, covered over with ruins, and the fragment of an ancient aqueduct, that had been supported on arches. I asked Abû Monsur, the name of the tell," continues M. Van de Velde, "and the answer was, 'Haida Dothan,' (that is Dothan.)" "The decay of the Jewish fortifications, and their being replaced by those of the middle ages, which, in their turn, have been thrown down, we find to have been the case almost all over Palestine."² The fortress has ceased from Ephraim.

The daguerreotype may here supply, on this theme, another and concluding illustration,—where art had once its triumph in another way, and Herod in a single spot set such a barrier to the ocean as can still withstand it, and erected towers which have fallen before the word of Him who set the sand on every shore to stay its proudest waves.

Buried as is the royal city of *Cæsarea*, enough of its harbour alone yet remains to show how princely that city was, when exalted unto heaven higher than was its tributary Capernaum. The original construction of the port was a vaunted triumph of ancient art, that did honour to a king who bore the name of Great. Immense stones above fifty feet long, eighteen broad, and nine deep—some less but others larger—were laid down to the depth of twenty fathoms, for the construction of a mole, whose width above the water was two hundred feet. The seaward half was denominated the first breaker of the waves. On the other, *towers* were erected, more celebrated than that of Strabo, which previously occupied the site of *Cæsarea*. Of these, the largest, a splendid work, bore the name of the Tower of Drusus, in honour of that son-in-law of Cæsar. Though now there be no towers to

¹ Van de Velde, vol. i. p. 352.

² Ibid. 364, 367.



defend the harbour, and no city to need their defence, and the only export from the tenantless *Cæsarea* be, like that of *Athlite*, stones from its ruins, yet so solid was the structure of the mole, that, after having been lashed for eighteen hundred years by the tempestuous ocean, the line of it still divides the smooth water from the broken waves, which, beyond it, on both sides, are only stayed upon the beach. But above the level of the water every structure is either vanished or broken; and the tumbled masses on the remaining tower, which bounded the harbour on the south, indicate its fall from the ruthless violence of man or storms of war, rather than from those of the ocean. The ruin, as in the plate, now stands as the only representative of the *Tower of Drusus*; but built as it partly is, as a narrow inspection may show, on prostrate columns, that may have changed their places from the portico of a palace or a temple to the buried base of a tower, a later construction than that by Herod is denoted, and a renewed proof is thus given that tower after tower has there fallen, while the hidden base of the mole beneath the waves has remained comparatively entire. The tower exists not, to stand another shock of war, though the break-water remains to allay the fury of the waves. *Cæsarea* is now the abode of wild beasts alone. But though the truth be clear to the eye, that, even as affecting the strongest bulwarks, *destruction has come upon destruction*, till over the *forts and towers the word of the Lord is perfect work*, yet the same Divine testimony bears that the time cometh when “violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation and thy *gates Praise*.”¹ The farther prospect which prophecy opens up, even from ruined towers and fallen fortresses, and harbours, which

¹ Isa. lx. 18.

like the cities may yet be repaired, is that of a time when such defences shall not be needed, even as the fact is clear that men have resorted to such bulwarks in vain. *Fortresses have ceased*; but the word that foretold their destruction does not fail. *They are for dens*,—not for ever, without a limit to the time—but *until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high*,—then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. *And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever.*¹ In the first verse of the same chapter it is written of Him of whom all the prophets testified, “Behold a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.” Jesus was sent by Pilate to Herod; but it may be seen how the proudest tower of that monarch has fallen before the word of the Lord by his prophets, and like his city and his kingdom lay within a higher jurisdiction than his own. And the utter destruction of many strongholds is a confirmation of the promise to which it points, “In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; *Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.—Trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength: for he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city he layeth it low; he layeth it low even to the ground; he bringeth it even to the dust.*”²

Such of old were the cities and the strongholds in the land of Israel; and, according to the word that comprehensively and indiscriminately fell upon them all,—such are they now. Their progressive desolation, perfected at last to the prescribed degree, the author has traced at length in other pages³—limiting these imperfect notices to existing

¹ Isa. xxxii. 14–17.

² Isa. xxvi. 1, 4, 5.

³ The Land of Israel, p. 164–384.

facts; of many of which, besides other testimonies, he can now speak as an eye-witness. Cumulative as the evidence is, it becomes the more complete, the more it is searched into; and little else than summary as is the needful notice of the promiscuous desolation that has come over the cities of the land, the few whose *burdens* bear their names, as significantly and emphatically show *the effect of every vision*.

*Hazor shall be a dwelling for dragons, and a desolation for ever; there shall no man abide there, nor any son of man dwell in it.*¹ In previous editions of this treatise, the author could not adduce any illustration of this prediction, after having long sought in vain for any recognition or identification of the city itself, either by historians or travellers, except the vague, and therefore unsatisfactory as indefinite notice by Burekhardt, who had heard of, but had not seen, “the ruins of a city called Hazouri.” Yet forgotten and unknown for many ages as it had been, it was once the capital of *kingdoms*. Its earliest history, from the first conquest of Canaan by the Israelites, and its latest, as desolate to this hour, are alike recorded in the Book of the Lord. *Joshua took Hazor, and smote the king thereof with the sword; for Hazor beforetime was the head of all those kingdoms*²—of Canaan. But when the children of Israel again and again did evil in the sight of the Lord, He sold them into the hand of Jabin, king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor, when the enemies of Israel had repossessed their metropolis. *Sisera* was the captain of his host. He had nine hundred chariots of iron; and twenty years he mightily oppressed the children of Israel.³ Hazor was one of the cities of the tribe of Naphtali. Separated as it was, in its fate, from the other cities at the first—burned and utterly destroyed by Joshua, while of the cities

¹ Jer. xlix. 33.² Josh. xi. 10.³ Judges iv. 2, 3.

that stood still in their strength, Israel burned none of them, save Hazor only¹—it is also so singled out, by a special judgment, from among many more, which pass unnamed under the general sentence of desolation, that its name, like that of Sisera of old, may be taken up in a triumphal song, such as, in prophetic truth, shall yet be raised over all the enemies of Israel.

“At the end of an hour and a half,” east by south from Paneas, on the route to Damascus, says Burckhardt, “we came to Ain-el-Hazouri, a spring, with the tomb of Sheikh Othman el-Hazouri just over it; to the north of it one hour are the ruins of a city called Hazouri. The mountain here is overgrown with oaks, but contains good pasturage. I was told that in the Wady Kastebe, near the castle, (of Paneas,) there are oak-trees more than sixty feet high. One hour more brought us to the village of Djoubela,”² &c.

Such is the passing and hearsay notice given by one of the most renowned and intelligent of modern travellers, of that city which was anciently the head of the kingdoms of Canaan. The writer is not aware that it is even mentioned by any other traveller since the days of Brocardus (Burckhardt), in the thirteenth century, who speaks of its ruins, but did not visit them. It is a *desolation*. And that predicted word has so fallen on it now, as it thus seems to have lain on it long, that but for the prophecy thereby confirmed, its ruins scarcely demand the notice of the traveller, to turn him aside from his path though in search of ruins, and though those that still bear its ancient name are very near to the route, as much trodden as most in the land, from Paneas to Damascus, by which many European travellers have passed. Such is the unregarded desolation now of the metropolis of the Canaanites, against which, as against them, the word of the Lord had gone

¹ Josh. xi. 13.

² Burckhardt's Syria, p. 44.

forth; and thus unknown it still might lie, for any other interest it now possesses, did not prophecy alone recall it from oblivion, to show what *desolation* the Lord hath wrought upon a city first spoken of in Scripture as the *head of the kingdoms* of Canaan.

The name Hazour is well known at Paneas. It designates the ruins; Ain-Hazour, the fountain of Hazour; and Djebel-Hazour, the hill of Hazor. The ruins are not, as stated to Burckhardt, an hour's distance from the spring; but comparatively near it, on the opposite side of a grove of noble oaks, such as scarcely any spot in England could show. The sheikh with whom he journeyed was on his way to Damascus; and, perhaps, wished not to be stayed on his journey by the idle curiosity of a traveller inquisitive about ruins, who, he may have thought, would have grudged an hour, but not, like himself, a few minutes, to look on fallen Hazor. He was the sheikh of the village of Paneas, within whose bounds the ruins lie; but in the *desolate* remains of Hazor he had nothing to show or boast of, in his estimation, worthy of the delay of a quarter of an hour. From that capital Jabin its king descended with his confederates to the *waters of Merom*, Lake Houle, or the Lacus Samachonitis, "and these kings pitched there together to fight against Israel."¹ Josephus in like manner fixes its site, in stating that Jabin went forth from the city of Asor, which is situated above the Lake Semechonitis.² The traveller, on the way from Jerusalem to Damascus, ascends from the waters of Merom to Paneas, and from thence ascends to Ain Hazour, and he needs but to turn aside a little way to see, when pointed out to him, the ruins that still bear the name of Hazour. The name remains, but the city is no

¹ Joshua xi. 5.

² "Οὗτος γὰρ ἐξ Ἀσώρου πόλεως ὁρμωμένος: ἀπὸ τῆς δ' ὑπερκείται τῆς Σεμεχωνιτιδος λαμῆς. Is (Jabinus) ex urbe Asoro ortus; hæc vero sita est super Semechonitidem lacum. Jos. Antiq. lib. v. c. v. § 1.

more, and literally, as the word of the Lord revealed the existing fact, though long unknown in other lands, *no man abides there, nor does a son of man dwell in it.* Its site is nearly midway between one poor village and another, that are about eight or nine miles apart. The fountain of Hazor now waters only a tomb. The city that was the *head of kingdoms* is a *desolation*; and now can only vie with the most complete ruins. Habitations for men there are none; and no man there occupies the poorest hovel, such as often rest on other ruins. Those of Hazor consist of the foundations of buildings, and heaps of stones spread over a considerable space, lying loosely together, and in some places thrown up into long lines, or dykes, full of holes, into which any reptiles may creep. Lizards may be seen every where, in great numbers, throughout the land. And purposely guarding against a leading question, and without speaking of serpents, the writer asked an old man, who left his flock at a short distance and came to him amidst the heaps, whether he ever saw any lizards running into the holes. He answered in the affirmative: and of his own accord added, that there were many serpents also, of which he mentioned three different kinds, of one of which the bite is death. He affirmed that he had himself seen some large serpents; and when asked if he had seen any as large as a stick which the author had in his hand, he held up his own wand, six feet in length, and said that he had seen some larger than it. He persisted in the assertion that there were many serpents that had their holes in the ruins; but when questioned, as a test of his veracity, about other animals, he stated, with seeming candour, that he had never seen any scorpions there. It is now obvious to any one who beholds them, that the stones of Hazor now lie, as if placed and fitted for being—what that city was to become—a *dwelling for serpents.*

No man shall abide there; nor any son of man dwell in it. Not a human habitation is near it; and situated as it is on the lower skirts of Hermon, the Bedouins do not there pitch their tents, as in the plains. No natural cause could be assigned for the completion of this wondrous prediction. The site was well fitted for the capital of Canaan; and the "host of Hazor," of which Sisera was the captain, has no mean place in Scriptural history. In the approach to it from Paneas, we repeatedly plucked, while seated on horseback, the flowers of myrtles, which, in their great abundance, perfumed the air; and woodbines, mint, thyme, hollies, and oleanders added to its fragrance, or adorned the wilderness. Near to the ruins, and not in the bottom of a valley but on the top of a hill, are stately oaks that would add to the grandeur of any park in England—four of which we measured from eleven feet and a half to upwards of thirteen feet in circumference—the branches of one of them extending seventy-four feet from the opposite extremities. The heights of Jebel Hazour are for the most part covered with thorns, and trees or bushes of the *quercus ilex* (oak) interspersed with roses, many prickly plants, varieties of thistles, one of them, together with a species of very high broom, distinguished by its beautiful yellow flowers. These, with some partial cultivation, show how plentifully industry might there reap its reward, in the environs of a city now itself a desolation. But while many citizens of modern towns court in other lands the shade of humbler trees, and are often crowded beneath them, there is not one inhabitant of that city now to rest under the lofty and umbrageous oaks of Hazor, or to drive a wolf from the fountain, or a serpent from its dwelling. There are other cities in the land once subject to that head of the kingdom, that still have men to dwell in them, the city that went out by a thousand may yet have a hundred left, and that which went out by a hun-

dred may count ten. Paneas, often taken and often demolished, has yet at least its twenty houses and its hundred inhabitants; and a large village still subsists on the nearest border of the marshy and pestiferous plain of Houle. But the doomed capital of Canaan, though rebuilt by Solomon, with its fountain still flowing pure as ever, its shady oaks, its rich and partly cultivated soil, and its pure air perfumed with the scent of Lebanon, is a *desolation, a dwelling of serpents*, and not of a single human being; *no man abides there; neither does a son of man dwell in it.*

"The name of the city of Jabin, Hazor, still lingers in the slopes of Hermon." "High on the rocky slopes above the town (*Cæsarea Philippi*, or Paneas), lingers the name of Hazor, the capital of Northern Palestine. A few rude stone blocks on a rocky eminence mark the probable site of the capital of Jabin, and close beside it still remains a deep circular grove of *ilxes*,—perhaps the best likeness which now exists of the ancient groves, so long identified with the Canaanitish worship of Astarte."¹

BETHEL, too, forms a theme, as it also had a distinguished place, among the cities of Israel. Though it was called Bethel, or the *house of God*, by the pilgrim father of the tribes of Israel, and though to him Jehovah said, I am the God of Bethel, yet that city became a chief seat of idolatry under the king of Israel. Jeroboam made two calves of gold, and said, Behold thy gods, O Israel; and he set up the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan. He raised an altar, and placed in Bethel priests of the high places, and sacrificed unto the calves that he had made. Bethel became a Beth-aven, or *house of idols*. But the word of the Lord went forth against it.—*I will visit the altars of Bethel: and the horns of the altar shall be cut off, and fall to the ground.*

¹ "Stanley's Sinai and Palestine," p. 383, 389.—There are other ruins in Palestine which bear the name of Hazor; but the site of Hazor above described alone corresponds with that of Hazor, according to Joshua and Josephus.

*And I will smite the winter-house with the summer-house ; and the houses of ivory shall perish, and the great houses shall have an end, saith the Lord.*¹ *Seek ye me, and ye shall live : but seek not Bethel.—Bethel shall come to nought.*² Long unknown, and if sought for, sought in vain, Bethel, to which idolatrous Israelites resorted, has of late years been identified with the ruins of Beitin. They lie in heaps. The great houses have an end. The ruined walls of a Greek church stand “within the foundations of a much larger and earlier edifice built of large stones, part of which have been used for erecting the later structure. The broken walls of several other churches are also to be distinguished.” The rest of the ruins are undistinguishable heaps. There were altars at Bethel, not only in Israelitish but in Christian times, as they are still to be seen in other ruined churches in the land. *But the thorn and the thistle have come up on their altars*, as on those of Beth-aven, where no summer-house or winter-house, or any other remains, and the traveler “can find nothing to take away but a stone,” where houses of ivory, that betokened pride, have *perished*, and *thistles* flourish amidst the ruins of *Bethel*, which has *come to nought*. “The foundations of houses, loose building stones, and fragments of walls, are to be seen in abundance ; the traces also of Christian churches.”³ “Beth-el, ‘the house of God,’ has become literally Beth-aven, ‘the house of nought.’”⁴

“Jesus upbraided the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, *because they repented not : Woe unto thee*

¹ Amos iii. 14, 15.

² Amos v. 4, 5.

³ Van de Velde, vol. ii, p. 283.

⁴ Stanley, p. 220.—In one of those sepulchres, says Mr Stanley, “lay side by side the bones of the two prophets—the aged prophet of Bethel, and his brother and victim, the ‘man of God from Judah,’ and they were left to repose. From that time (?) the desolation foretold by Amos and Hosea has never been disturbed ; and Beth-el, ‘the house of God,’ has become literally Beth-aven, ‘the house of nought.’” In Bethel there were Christian churches ; and yet the prophecy is literally true at this day : *Because they have changed the ordinances, and broken the everlasting covenant, therefore hath the curse devoured the land, &c.*

Chorazin! woe unto thee Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.—*And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven shalt be brought down to hell.*"¹ Capernaum was *on the sea-coast*, or on the shore of the lake of Tiberias, in the border of Zabulun and Nephthalim. Exalted as it was into heaven, there is not now a city, nor village, nor ruined town which now bears its name; and hence its site has not, with absolute certainty, been ascertained. For centuries past it has generally been identified with the ruins of *Tell-hum*, which lie *on the sea-coast* or shore, near to the northern extremity of the lake. In the land itself they are still said to be the ruins of Capernaum, though bearing another name. They form no inconsiderable field of ruins, at least a mile and a half in circumference. There is not a single dwelling or inhabitant on the desolate and deserted spot. Foundations of buildings, fallen walls, and heaps of stones, now cover the space where once stood a town. Its ancient houses are now strewed in promiscuous ruin upon the ground. The walls of a small ruined building are alone erect; but they pertained not, as they now stand, to the ancient city, for they have been raised from older ruins, as columns and pilasters imbedded in their structure, plainly show. There is not a house that has not been *brought down to hades*, as the original bears, or to utter destruction. All have ceased to exist. Not far from the only unfallen ruin are the *prostrate ruins* of an edifice, which Dr Robinson well describes, and of which he states that, "for expense of labour and ornament, it surpasses anything we had yet seen in Palestine. The extent of the foundations of this structure is no longer definitely to be made out. We measured one hundred and five feet along the northern wall,

¹ Matt. xi. 20-23.

and eight feet along the western,—perhaps this was their whole length. Within the space thus enclosed, and just around, are strewn, in utter confusion, numerous columns of compact limestone, with beautiful Corinthian capitals, sculptured entablatures, ornamental friezes, and the like. The pedestals of the columns are still in their place, though somewhat overturned and removed. The columns are large, but of regular length. Here we found for the first time, the singularity of double columns; that is, two attached shafts, with capitals and base, cut from the same solid block—several blocks of stone are nine feet long, by half that width, and of considerable thickness, on one side of which are sculptured panels with ornamental work, now defaced. The whole edifice must have been of an elegant structure—the confusion is too great and hopeless to admit of any certainty as to the character of the building.”¹ Such now is the long-reputed site of Capernaum,—and doubtless of a city in which Jesus preached and did many mighty works,—and such, so far as can be discerned now, are the prostrate ruins of its noblest edifice.—But the fact stated by Josephus that in his day a fountain called Capharnaoum (in some MSS. *Καπαρναώμ*, Kaparnaoum) watered the plain of Gennesareth, seems to justify the opinion of Baronius, and others, that the town had hence its name, and was situated there. The ancient names both of the fountain and of the city, so far as can with certainty be known, have perished, and *Capernaum*, under its own name, has been sought for in vain, as if it had gone down to hades. The copious fountain of Ain-el-Tin, beside the ruined Khan Minyeh, and a low mound with ruins in the vicinity, have been conjectured with seeming probability to be the fountain and the site of Capernaum. If such it be, other memorials of the lost city may be discovered amidst the adjoining heights, or

¹ Robinson and Smith, vol. iii. pp. 298, 299.

the surrounding thickets, that to the passers-by have often hid the fountain itself from view; and clearer proof may thereby be given that Capernaum has *been thrust down* from a station well fitted for a paradise. Whether it stood in the one place or the other, Capernaum has fallen as low as any proud city can lie.

While at Tell-Hum we asked an Arab soldier, who accompanied us from Tiberias, if there were similar ruins, or any others, in the neighbourhood, and he at once mentioned Tell, on the Jordan, and Korazi. We then went to a Bedouin, whom we saw at a short distance, and put to him the same question. He immediately answered, "At Ain Korazi," and pointed towards it in the same direction. The one said it was an hour distant, the other "an hour and a half." On reaching the ruins, three Zingaris, or Gipsies, whose low tents were at a short distance, came down with lebban, or sour milk, for sale. When questioned as to the name of the ruins in the midst of which we were, they answered with one voice, before the word was uttered in their hearing, *Korazi*; and when interrogated anew, they repeated it emphatically, with visible expressions of surprise at our seeming doubts. There seems no reason for questioning that Korazi is the Chorazin of Scripture, in which it is not said to stand on the *shore* of the lake of Tiberias, as Capernaum and Bethsaida are. We reached it in fifty-five minutes from the chief ruin of Tell-Hum, from three to four miles distant. It lies almost directly to the west of the point where the Jordan flows into the lake. It retains the name; and is known by it still among the inhabitants of the country around, and as we repeatedly inquired, especially at Safet, by no other. The name, as pronounced, was there written in Arabic, in the author's note-book, by an intelligent native of the country, Korazi. It was doubtless, he said, the Chorazin of Scripture.

Korazee, of which not a house now stands, consists of fallen walls lying in heaps, of no defined form, intermixed with lines of ruined buildings, and some squares whose form is still entire, filled with ruins. The remains of huts which have been built in the midst of previous ruins, and formed out of them, disfigure in many places the structure of the original buildings, so as to render it untraceable. As in Tell-Hum, several pedestals of columns retain their position, but the shafts are levelled with the ground and intermingled with the fallen dwellings. Many of the stones, either fixed in the remnants of the walls or fallen, are from three to five feet long; and others longer. In general, like those of Tell-Hum, they are only roughly cut. The most noticeable objects in prostrate Chorazin are the remains of a building formed of large hewn stones, with many lying in masses;—another ruin, the walls of which, still standing, built of hewn stone roughly cut and partly corroded, are well coated in the inside with plaster, which still partly adheres to them without;—two tops of niches, of the shell pattern, very entire, and beautifully cut, finely arched, and figured on the edges;—and, also prostrate on the ground, two well cut and ornamented upper lintels, which once covered the door-ways, six and eight feet wide, which seem to show that houses which were not lowly, have been *thrust down* to the dust,—and under which may have passed some of the men that brought the word of *woe* from the lips of Jesus on impenitent Chorazin, now without a house or an inhabitant though Tyre and Sidon have their dwellers still.

It is a desolate place, as it has a cheerless look. No plaster now covers its black stones as they lie upon the ground. A small field of tobacco, amidst the ruins, was the only sign of industry about it: and, though in a hilly region, a few poor tents were the only dwellings near it. Its ruins are at least a mile in circumference, possibly more:

for covered as they are with thistles, rank weeds, and a few wild figs—a token of times long past—its site, at a short distance, is scarcely distinguishable from its desolate vicinity.

Bethsaida of Galilee, that stood like Capernaum on the shore, may yet be discovered, if its ruins have not perished, and its name be not lost. *Bethsaida*, on the eastern bank of Jordan, where some of Christ's miracles were wrought, has been known ere now to have extensive ruins at el Tell—but tents are the chief dwellings of those who now pasture their flocks around it.

On the west borders of the lake of Tiberias in the land of Galilee, the cities in which Jesus did mighty works, and yet they *repented not*, are no more. And the only village that retains an inhabitant,—though it has not escaped the curse which the last word of the Old Testament dropped upon the land, if it would not hear the Messenger of the Lord,—is that of Magdala, which gave her surname to a great sinner, who became a great penitent and *loved* the Saviour *much*; and who, having washed his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head, has given that name to many an *asylum* throughout the world; while Chorazin, *Bethsaida*, and Capernaum which was exalted unto heaven in its pride, have, as cities, long passed into utter ruin and oblivion. Mighty works of Jesus were done in them: and his word, as mighty, rests upon them still. They have been made to hear it; though they would not listen in faith to the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth, nor regard his upbraiding because of their impenitence. But they are their own witnesses of their *woe*, as He denounced it; and they show that his words, however disregarded, do *not pass away*.

SECTION III.

DESOLATION OF THE LAND OF ISRAEL.

*And your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land: even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths, etc.*¹ A single reference to the Mosaic law respecting the Sabbatical year, renders the full import of this prediction perfectly intelligible and obvious. "But in the seventh year shall be a Sabbath of rest unto the land; thou shalt neither sow thy field nor prune thy vineyard." And the land of Judea hath even thus enjoyed its Sabbaths so long as it hath lain desolate. In that country where every spot was cultivated like a garden by its patrimonial possessor, where every little hill rejoiced in its abundance, where every steep acclivity was terraced by the labour of man, and where the very rocks were covered with thick mould, and rendered fertile; even in that self-same land, with a temperature the same² and with a soil unchanged save only by neglect, a dire contrast is now and has for a lengthened period of time been displayed by fields untilled and unsown, and by waste and desolated plains. Never since the expatriated descendants of Abraham were driven from its borders, has the land of Canaan been so "plenteous in goods," or so abundant in population as once it was; never, as it did for ages unto them, has it vindicated to any other people a right to its *possession*, or its own title of the land of promise; it has rested from century to century; and while that marked, and stricken, and scattered race, who possess

¹ Lev. xxvi. 33, 34.

² See Brewster's Philosophical Journal, No. xvi. p. 227.

the recorded promise of the God of Israel as their charter to its final and everlasting possession, still "*be in the land of their enemies, so long their land lieth desolate.*" There may thus almost be said to be the semblance of a sympathetic feeling between this bereaved country and banished people, as if the land of Israel felt the miseries of its absent children, awaited their return, and responded to the undying love they bear it, by the refusal to yield to other possessors the rich harvest of those fruits, with which, in the days of their allegiance to the Most High, it abundantly blessed *them*. And striking and peculiar, without the shadow of even a semblance upon earth, as is this accordance between the fate of Judea and of the Jews, it assimilates as closely, (and, may we not add, as miraculously?) to those predictions respecting both, which Moses uttered and recorded ere the tribes of Israel had ever set a foot in Canaan. *The land shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them.*¹

To the desolate state of Judea, compared with what it was, every traveller bears witness. The prophetic malediction was addressed to the mountains and the hills, to the rivers and to the valleys; and the beauty of them all has been blighted. Where the inhabitants once dwelt in peace, each under his own vine, and under his own fig-tree, the tyranny of the Turks, and the perpetual incursions of the Arabs, the last of a long list of oppressors, have spread one wide field of almost unmingled desolation. The plain of Esdraelon, naturally most fertile, its soil consisting of "fine rich black mould,"² bounded by Carmel, Gilboa, Little Hermon, Mount Tabor, and the hills of Nazareth, and so extensive as to cover about three hundred square miles, is a solitude,³ almost entirely deserted.⁴ South of Hebron, through hills

¹ Lev. xxvi. 43.

² General Straton's MS. Travels.

³ Clarke's Travels, vol. ii. p. 497. Maundrell's Travels, p. 95.

⁴ Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, pp. 334, 342.

and valleys of Judah, and the extensive plain of Beersheba, a day's journey may be passed without seeing a cultivated field, except perhaps a spot scratched by the wretched plough of the Bedouins. The country is continually overrun with rebel tribes; the Arabs pasture their cattle upon the spontaneous produce of the rich plains with which it abounds.¹ Every ancient landmark is removed. "The art of cultivation," says Volney, "is in the most deplorable state, and the countryman must sow with the musket in his hand; and no more is sown than is barely necessary for subsistence." "Every day I found fields abandoned by the plough."² In describing his journey through Galilee, Dr Clarke remarks, that the earth was covered with such a variety of thistles, that a complete collection of them would be a valuable acquisition to botany.³ Six new species of that plant, so significant of natural fertility and existing desolation, were discovered by himself in a scanty selection. It is needless to multiply quotations to prove the desolation of a country which the Turks have possessed, and which the Arabs have plundered for ages. But evidence may here be adduced from the Official Report of a Commissioner of the British Government on the Commercial Statistics of Syria, which was presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty (Lond. 1840). "The agricultural produce of Syria is far less than might have been expected from the extensive tracts of fertile lands, and the favourable character of the climate. In the districts where hands are found to cultivate the fields, production is large, and the return for capital is considerable; but the want of population for the purposes of cultivation is deplorable. *Regions of the highest fertility remain fallow*, and the traveller passes over contiguous leagues of the richest soil, which is wholly

¹ Clarke's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 484, 491.

² Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 413. Volney's Ruins, c. xi. p. 7.

³ Clarke's Travels, vol. ii. p. 451.

unproductive to man.”¹ Regions of the highest fertility lie fallow, or, in other words, the land rests and enjoys its Sabbaths, and lieth desolate without its ancient inhabitants, who are still *scattered* throughout the world in the lands of their enemies. *The land mourns and is laid waste*, and each stranger from a far land now sees what the prophet saw in vision—*I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness.*²

While eye-witnesses in modern times have thus borne ample, uniform, and decisive testimony to the general desolation of Judea, yet such is the natural fertility of the land, that a temporary respite from predatory assaults, even under the penalty of grievous exactions and oppressive bondage, leads, on the part of the miserable peasantry, to a more extended though not improved cultivation of the lands which environ their miserable villages; and, as described by different travellers at different times, the same spot may assume a somewhat varied aspect. But the general desolation abides unchanged; every prophetic characteristic remains: and each place, when named, preserves its peculiar prophetic features. The cultivation is everywhere wretched. And though an extensive range of ripened grain may in some places present to view, as often witnessed by the writer, a seemingly rich prospect, which, on glancing over its golden surface at a distance, the yellow ears overtopping the weeds, gives promise of a rich harvest; yet, in the plains of Judea, the shocks, as in our less fertile soil and far colder clime, fall not heavy into the hands of the reaper. For on closer inspection the ranker weeds are but ill concealed; the grain is often reduced to less than half of what it seemed; and not unfrequently, whenever the cropped ears of the thin barley had been removed, a field of thistles appeared in their stead, covering the ground so closely that they formed the most abundant and seemed the only crop.

¹ Dr Bowring's Report on Syria, p. 9.

² Jer. iv. 26.

Of the mountains of Judea it may be said, that they have been *always waste*; and they specially have been a *derision*. At first sight they seem to merit it. They are bleak and bare. Their aspect, as they rise naked from the plain, is that of dreary desolation, if not of irreclaimable barrenness. The marvel is, that they should ever have formed a large portion of a glorious land, or that those hills should have rejoiced on every or on any side, on which a solemn stillness and gloomy sadness now rest. The Christian or the pilgrim Jew may well ask himself, in doubt, Can these be the mountains of Israel? And the sceptic may deceitfully think to justify himself in the averment, apparently warranted by pointing to the desolate hills of Judea, if such was the seat of the glory of Solomon, surely the record of that glory is a fable. Assuredly the land has another and opposite aspect and character now from that which it bore, when it was *a good land, a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil-olive, and honey; a land wherein Israel did eat bread without scarceness and lacked not anything*, Deut. viii. 7-9. The contrast is so great and dire, that some visible demonstration may be needful to sustain a faltering faith, and refute an apparently rational incredulity. But the unquestioned and unquestionable fact is, as predicted, that the mountains of Israel are *waste and desolate*. And the more nearly they are seen, the more manifest is the proof, and the more *astonishing* is the fact, that so marvellous a desolation has come over them. Approaching their base the prospect becomes more saddening; and, looking from beneath, nothing in many places but the stony fronts of the empty terraces, successively receding and ascending, is to be seen, desolation having trodden on every step. And the frowning mountains look down on those who pass beneath, as if they angrily responded to the

reproaches which have been cast upon them, and uttered forth the judgments which they bear. Still nothing can be more palpably manifest, than that the mountains have been *laid* desolate, and that the time was when art, and climate, and soil combined their utmost powers to adorn and enrich them as a garden which the Lord had blessed. And with a glance the wonder ceases, how they were of old renowned for beauty and fertility; and the more just astonishment cannot be repressed, how such extensive regions, terraced all over, and ever ready for renewed cultivation, could have lain desolate for so many generations, or how, were the restraining cause removed, they could remain unproductive for a single year. Ascending on the way from Gaza to Jerusalem, between two hills, so as to pass by the lowest level, the writer counted on one of them sixty-seven successive terraces, perfectly distinct, and in many places complete. The whole scene around, in an extensive view, gave similar demonstration of ancient glory and existing desolation, the extreme contrast rendering each the more *astonishing*. Hill after hill was lined throughout, from the base to the summit, with terraces fading only in the distance, generally uncovered now but by weeds and creeping thorns, which rise not enough to hide the stony fronts which of old were cut from the rock or built by man, to clothe the mountains with vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates, and olives, and other fruits, of which, but in isolated spots often hid from the general view, not a vestige remains.

"The tangled and featureless hills of the lowlands of Scotland and North Wales," says Mr Stanley, "are perhaps the nearest likeness accessible to Englishmen, of the general landscape of Palestine south of the plain of Esdraelon. Rounded hills . . . their sides formed into concentric rings of rock, which must have served in ancient times as supports to the terraces, of which there are still traces to their very

summits; valleys, or rather the meetings of these gray slopes with the beds of water-courses at their feet; long sheets of bare rock, laid like flagstones, side by side, along the soil; these are the chief features of the greater part of the scenery of the historical parts of Palestine. . . . These rounded hills, occasionally stretching into long undulating ranges, are for the most part bare of wood.”¹

*I will give it into the hands of the STRANGERS for a prey, and to the wicked of the earth for a SPOIL.—The ROBBERS shall enter into it and defile it.*² Instead of abiding under a settled and enlightened government, Judea has been the scene of frequent invasions, “which have introduced a succession of foreign nations (*des peuples étrangers*)”³ “When the Ottomans took Syria from the Mamelouks, they considered it as the *spoil* of a vanquished enemy. According to this law, the life and *property* of the vanquished belong to the conqueror. The government is far from disapproving of a system of *robbery* and plunder which it finds so profitable.”⁴

*Many PASTORS have destroyed my vineyard, they have TRODDEN my portion under foot.*⁵ The ravages committed even by hosts of enemies are in general only temporary; or if an invader settle in a conquered country, on becoming the possessor, he cultivates and defends it. And it is the proper office of government to render life and property secure. In neither case has it fared thus with Judea. But besides successive invasions by foreign nations, and the systematic spoliation exercised by a despotic government, other causes have conspired to perpetuate its desolation, and to render abortive the *substance that is in it*. Among these has chiefly to be numbered, its being literally *trodden under foot by many pastors*. Volney devotes a chapter, fifty pages

¹ Stanley, p. 137.

² Ezek. vii. 21, 22.

³ Volney's Travels, vol. i. p. 356.

⁴ Volney's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 370, 381.

⁵ Jer. xii. 10.

in length, to a description, as he entitles it, "of the *pastoral* or *wandering* tribes of Syria," chiefly of the Bedouin Arabs, by whom, especially, Syria is incessantly traversed. "The pachalics of Aleppo and Damascus may be computed to contain about thirty thousand wandering Turkmen (Turkomans). All their property consists in cattle." In the same pachalics, the number of the Curds "exceeds twenty thousand tents and huts," or an equal number of armed men. "The Curds are almost everywhere looked upon as robbers. Like the Turkmen, these Curds are *pastors* and *wanderers*."¹ A third wandering people in Syria are the Bedouin Arabs."² "It often happens that even individuals, turned *robbers* in order to withdraw themselves from the laws or from tyranny, unite and form a little camp, which maintain themselves by arms, and increasing, become new hordes and new tribes. We may pronounce, that in cultivable countries the wandering life originates in the injustice or want of policy of the government; and that the sedentary and the cultivating state is that to which mankind is most naturally inclined."³ "It is evident that agriculture must be very precarious in such a country, and that, under a government like that of the Turks, it is safer to lead a wandering life, than to choose a settled habitation, and rely for subsistence on agriculture."⁴ "The Turkmen, the Curds, and the Bedouins, have *no fixed habitations*, but keep *perpetually wandering* with their tents and *herds*, in limited districts, of which they look upon themselves as the proprietors. The Arabs spread over the whole frontier of Syria, and even the plains of Palestine."⁵—Thus, contrary to their natural inclination, the peasants, often forced to abandon a settled life, and pastoral tribes in great numbers, or *many*, and without fixed habitations, divide the country, as it were by mutual consent, and

¹ Volney's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 370-375.

² Ibid. vol. i. p. 377.

³ Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 383.

⁴ Ibid. p. 387.

⁵ Ibid. pp. 367, 368.

apportion it in limited districts among themselves by an assumed right of property, and the Arabs, subdivided also into different tribes, spread over the plains of Palestine, "wandering perpetually," as if on very purpose to *tread it down*.—What could be more unlikely or unnatural in such a land! yet what more strikingly and strictly true! or how else could the *effect of the vision* have been seen! "Many *pastors* have destroyed my vineyard; they have *trodden* my portion *under foot*." Volney's testimony might here suffice, but a single illustration from a recent traveller in Bashan may here be subjoined, where many might be added. As seen and described by Mr Porter, at Kanawat in Jebel Hauran, "the whole hill-sides around seemed suddenly filled with life, and the glens and vales resounded with the cry of the shepherds, and the bleatings of their vast flocks as they led them off to pasture.—The shepherds had none of that peaceful and placid aspect which is generally connected in the mind with pastoral life and habits, they were all wild and savage-looking, especially the Arabs. The equipment of these men was in general very formidable. In addition to the long gun, most of them carried a light ornamented battle-axe, while in the belt were pistols and daggers."¹

*Ye shall be as a garden that hath no water.*² *How long shall the land mourn, and the herbs of every FIELD wither, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein?*³—"In all hot countries, wherever there is water, vegetation may be perpetually maintained and made to produce an uninterrupted succession of fruits to flowers, and flowers to fruit."⁴ "The remains of cisterns are to be found (throughout Judea), in which they collected the rain-water; and *traces* of the canals by which those waters were distributed on the *fields*.—These labours necessarily created a prodigious fertility

¹ Porter's Five Years in Damascus, vol. ii. p. 100.

² Isa. i. 30.

³ Jer. xii. 4.

⁴ Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 359.

under an ardent sun, where a little water was the only requisite to revive the vegetable world.”¹ Such labours, with very slight exceptions, are now unknown. Judea is as a garden that hath no water, and the herbs of every field wither. “We see there *none* of that gay carpeting of *grass and flowers* which decorate the meadows of Normandy and Flanders, nor those clumps of beautiful trees which give such richness and animation to the landscapes of Burgundy and Brittany.—The land of Syria has almost always a *dusty appearance*.”² Had not these countries been *ravaged by the hand of man*, they might perhaps at this day have been shaded with forests. That its productions do not correspond with its natural advantages, is less owing to its physical than political state.”³

In a dry season, or even soon after copious rains have ceased, the unshaded and unwatered ground is speedily scorched by the heat; in early summer, the herbs soon wither, and the grass, wherever it grows, is dry. Throughout the land, grass or hay is never cut, that food for cattle may be stored, and fresh verdure clothe the ground; but the *herbs of every field wither*, and hence, from the accomplishment of this word, the *dusty appearance* of the land of Syria, by which the sceptic characterises it, and, as he well may, sets up in contrast the gay carpeting of Normandy. South of Hebron we passed, for a day's journey, through withered herbs, chiefly a species of wild barley, which covered the ground like a parched and stunted crop. As in other places, we passed for many a mile along the rich valley of the Jordan—which might well vie in its produce with tropical climes—through withered thistles and other herbs as dry,—though not far from its banks that are fringed with verdant trees. “In returning from the Kalaat

¹ Malte-Brun's Geography, vol. ii. pp. 150, 151.

² Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 359.

³ Ibid. pp. 359, 360.

Haman," says Burckhardt, "I was several times reprimanded by my guide, for not taking proper care of the tobacco that fell from my pipe. *The whole of the mountain is thickly covered with dry grass, which readily takes fire, and the slightest breath of air instantly spreads the conflagration far over the country, to the great risk of the peasant's harvest.*" — "The Arabs who inhabit the valley of the Jordan, invariably put to death any person who is known to have been even the innocent cause of *firing the grass*. One evening, while at Tabaria, I saw a large fire on the opposite side of the lake, which spread with great velocity for two days, till its progress was checked by the wady Feik."¹ Contiguous leagues of the richest soil, lying fallow in regions of the highest fertility, though wholly unproductive to man, as recorded in the Parliamentary Report, bear abundant proof, *that the land is as a garden that hath no water, that the land mourns, and the herbs of every field do wither, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.*

*Sharon is like a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits.*² No precise illustration of these predictions was given in several previous editions of this treatise; but an extract from the work of a more recent traveller may show how the celebrated plain of Sharon not only partakes of the general desolation, as predicted, but how it also bears witness to the word that has fallen upon itself. "The plain of Sharon," says Mr Robinson, "celebrated in Scripture for its fertility, and the beautiful flowers that grow spontaneously from the soil, stretches along the coast, from Gaza on the south to Mount Carmel in the north, being bounded towards the east by the hills of Judea and Samaria. The soil is composed of very fine sand,³ which,

¹ Burckhardt, pp. 331, 332.

² Isaiah xxxiii. 9.

³ In some places along the coast the sand from the sea-shore has partially spread over the borders of the plain and mingled with the soil. But like other plains of Palestine, that of Sharon consists of rich as well as deep alluvial soil.

though mixed with gravel, appears extremely fertile, and yet it is but partially cultivated, and still less inhabited. On either side of the road ruined and abandoned villages present themselves to the view of the disappointed traveller, impressing him with a species of melancholy which he is at a loss to account for, seeing no just cause for the existence of such a state of things in a land 'so plenteous in goods,' and so abundant in population as once it was. If he should attribute it, as most likely he will, to the misrule of those that govern, he may, after mature reflection, ask himself the question: The judgments pronounced against the land, have they yet received their full completion? And are not its present rulers the visible instruments of those judgments? 'Your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers.'"¹ Having since passed through Sharon from end to end, we may affirm, from personal observation, that *Sharon is a wilderness*. With very partial exceptions it is now abandoned to the Bedouins, who in the present day pitch their tents near to the sea-shore, as well as on the borders of the desert. In an extensive view over the plain from elevated ground beside the village of Mukhalid, not a village nor habitation was to be seen, as far as the eye can reach, and before arriving there from the north, not an inhabited village had we passed or seen, for the distance, along the coast, of six hours and a-half, or about twenty miles, though the ruined capital of Herod lay in our path; and the nearest in any direction, we were told, is ten miles distant. But true it is of Sharon, as of other plains, that, while strangers have devoured it, and the wicked of the earth have made of it a prey and a spoil, many pastors or herdsmen tread it under foot, and have made the pleasant portion of the Lord a desolate *wilderness*. We there saw nine or ten

¹ Travels in Syria, by G. Robinson, Esq. vol. i. pp. 25, 26.

flocks of cattle and sheep, some of which were large, spread over the nearest borders of the plain. The habitations of the solitary village are wretched hovels, and the cattle pertaining to it, far too few to depasture the adjacent plain, where the flocks of the wandering Arabs freely roam. But deserted and desolate as it lies, the wilderness retains not a little of the beauty of Sharon, ere, unsheltered as it is, it is scorched by the summer sun, its grass withered and its flowers faded. The ground is in many places covered with beautiful flowers. About midway between Mukhalid and Jaffa, the borders of a stream (the Phaalek) were extremely rich, after the earlier rain, in wild spontaneous produce; and vigorous plants were matted together in impenetrable closeness and the richest luxuriance. Yet even there desolation is still advancing in unarrested progress; and one of its causes, not overlooked in prophecy, may be witnessed in its defacing and destructive effects, where the traveller seems to be leaving a desolated plain for a rich orchard, or a shady grove, or—what all the land shall yet be—a garden like that of Eden.¹ But on a closer inspection several of the trees were *withering* away, but not from age. They had not been scathed from the top by lightning; but, with less instantaneous but not less destructive efficacy, they had been burned at the root by Bedouins. The lowest part of the trunks, half through or more, had been turned into ashes, and the trees were left standing to wither and die, till the hand could pull them down, or a blast lay them on the ground, when their *withered branches* would be fitted for the *fires* of the Bedouins, with the trunks, perhaps, of other trees for their hearths. In some instances, the soil had been partly scraped out beneath, to form hollows for the fire, as seen by the uncovered and burned roots. While desolation thus continues to spread over Sharon and other plains—

¹ Ezek. xxxvi. 35.

where all manner of fruit-trees of old adorned and enriched the land—the time is long past in which *one generation had to tell another* of such judgments ere they came; but how true as to the past, with such direful causes in operation still, is the word of the Lord, whether figuratively or literally,—*a nation is come up upon my land—he hath laid my vine waste, and barked my fig-tree: he hath made it clean bare, and cast it away; the branches thereof are made white.—The vine is dried up, and the fig-tree languisheth; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men.*¹—Numberless are the trees that have thus been withered, till over extensive plains there is no fruit to be plucked from a tree, and Bedouins have often far to wander ere they pitch their tents near any trees that remain, not for fruit to eat, but for branches to burn. *Sharon is like a wilderness;*

And BASHAN and Carmel shake off their fruits. “The oppressions of the government, on the one side, and those of the Bedouins, on the other, have reduced the Fellah of the Haouran (Bashan) to a state little better than that of the wandering Arab. Few individuals, either among the Druses or Christians, die in the same village in which they were born. Families are continually moving from one place to another; in the first year of their new settlement, the sheikh acts with moderation towards them; but his vexations becoming in a few years insupportable, they fly to some other place; but they soon find that the *same system prevails over the whole country.*—This continued wandering is one of the principal reasons why *no village in the Haouran has either orchards or fruit-trees*, or gardens for the growth of vegetables. ‘Shall we sow for strangers,’ was the answer

¹ Joel i. 6, 7, 12.

of a Fellah, to whom I once spoke on the subject, and who by the word strangers meant both the succeeding inhabitants, and the Arabs, who visit the Haouran in the spring and summer.”¹ “Of the vineyards, for which Bozrah was celebrated, and which are commemorated by Greek medals, ΚΟΛΩΝΙΑ ΒΟΥΤΡΗΚ, *not a vestige* remains. There is scarcely a tree in the neighbourhood of the town; and the twelve or fifteen families who now (1812) inhabit it cultivate nothing but wheat, barley, horse-beans, and a little dhourra. A number of fine rose-trees grow wild among the ruins of the town, and were just beginning to open their buds.”² Where wheat and barley lately grew, and celebrated vineyards anciently flourished for ages, and fine rose-trees shoot up *wild* as in a wilderness, among the ruins of the city that was for ages the capital of the Haouran, no natural cause exists to prevent the growth of fruit-trees, or diminish the renown of vineyards as of old. But the word is that of the God of nature, *Bashan shall shake off its fruits*. Yet He is also the *God of hope*, to them that believe his word. And while the fruitless Bashan is a witness to sceptics of its truth, they who are not such may see in the roses that bloom over the ruins of Bozrah, a token of the coming time—as a prophetic emblem of the fact, that *the desert shall blossom as the rose*—when another word shall be fulfilled, and *Israel shall feed on Bashan*.

CARMEL, as well as Bashan, has heard the word of the Lord. It was renowned, even among the mountains of Israel, for its *excellency*, as denoted by its name, a *fruitful* field. Such was its fruitfulness, and so close the thickets on its top, that, as most forcibly indicating the impossibility of the escape of any from the all-searching eye and righteous judgments of the living God, it is said, “though they dig into hell, thence shall my hand take them; though they

¹ Burckhardt's Syria, p. 299.

² Ibid. p. 236.

climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down; and though they hide themselves in *the top of Carmel*, I will search them out thence," &c.—Amos ix. 2, 3. "The top and sides of Carmel," says Lord Lindsay, "are covered with shrubs and flowers, but *quite bare of trees*: a few olives flourish at its foot, and on the lowest slopes, as if trying to get up and invalidate the prophecy. The 'excellency of Carmel' is indeed departed."¹ "The view from here (the summit of Carmel) is very grand, but somewhat saddening, from the loneliness and want of cultivation that everywhere meet the eye. 'The excellency of Carmel is' indeed 'departed'—wide tracts of land, unchequered by a village; at the base of the mountain a few bald corn-fields, and some olive and sycamore trees, compose the view."² The land has been smitten till Sharon is a wilderness, and Carmel is bare. From its summit and its sides, it has *shaken off its fruit*, as the land shook off its people. *As long as they* be in their enemies' land, so long does Carmel, as a portion of their own, lie desolate. But if the time be not distant now—as we think that there are many signs to show that it is not—*when ungodliness shall be turned away from Jacob; and the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found, and the Lord will pardon those whom He will reserve*—then the excellency of Carmel shall return, and fruit-trees may begin to creep up the hill, not to invalidate, but, in another manner and in other days, to substantiate prophecy, *for, in those days, and in that time, Israel, come again to his habitation, shall feed on Carmel and Bashan.*³

The LAMBS feed after their manner, and the waste places of the fat ones shall STRANGERS eat. Josephus describes Galilee, of which he was the governor, as "full of planta-

¹ Lord Lindsay's Travels, vol. ii. p. 78.

² The Crescent and the Cross, vol. ii. p. 119.

³ Rom. xi. 26. Jer. i. 19, 20.

tions of trees of all sorts, the soil universally rich and fruitful, and all, without the exception of a single part, cultivated by the inhabitants. Moreover," he adds, "the cities lie here very thick, and there are very many villages, which are so full of people by the richness of their soil, that the very least of them contained above fifteen thousand inhabitants."¹ Such was Galilee, at the commencement of the Christian era, several centuries after the prophecy was delivered; but now, "the plain of Esdraelon, and all the other parts of Galilee which afford *pasture*, are occupied by Arab tribes, around whose brown tents the sheep and *lambs* gambol to the sound of the reed, which at night-fall calls them home."² The wide undulations of the plain of Sharon "are sprinkled with *Bedouin* tents, and vast flocks of sheep."³ The calf feeds and lies down amidst the ruins of the cities, and consumes, without hindrance, the branches of the trees; and however changed may be the condition of the inhabitants, the *lambs feed after their manner*, and, while the land mourns, and the merry-hearted sigh, they gambol to the sound of the reed.—*There shall the calf feed, and there shall he lie down and consume the branches thereof.*

*When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off; the women come and set them on fire: for it is a people of no understanding.*⁴ The precise and complete contrast between the ancient and existing state of Palestine, as separately described by Jewish and Roman historians and by modern travellers, is so strikingly exemplified in their opposite descriptions, that in reference to whatever constituted the beauty and the glory of the country, or the happiness of the people, an entire change is manifest, even in minute circumstances. The universal richness and fruitful-

¹ Josephus' Wars, book iii. chap. iii. § 2.

² Schulze, quoted by Malte-Brun, vol. ii. p. 148.

³ Stanley, p. 256.

⁴ Isaiah xxvii. 11.

ness of the soil of Galilee, together with its being "full of plantations of all sorts of trees," are represented by Josephus as "inviting the most slothful to take pains in its cultivation." And the other provinces of the Holy Land are also described by him as having "abundance of trees, full of autumnal fruit, both that which grows wild and that which is the effect of cultivation."¹ Tacitus relates, that, besides all the fruits of Italy, the palm and balsam-tree flourished in the fertile soil of Judea. And he records the great carefulness with which, when the circulation of the juices seemed to call for it, they gently made an incision in the branches of the balsam, with a shell or pointed stone, not venturing to apply a knife.² No sign of such art or care is now to be seen throughout the land. The balsam-tree has disappeared where it long flourished; and hardier plants have perished from other causes than the want of due care in their cultivation. And instead of relating how the growth of a delicate tree is promoted, and the medicinal liquor, at the same time, extracted from its branches, by a nicety or perfectness of art worthy of the notice of a Tacitus, a different task has fallen to the lot of the traveller from a far land, who describes the customs of those who now dwell where such arts were practised. "The olive-trees (near Arimathea) are daily perishing through age, the *ravages* of contending factions, and even *from secret mischief*. The Mamelouks having cut down all the olive-trees, for the pleasure they take in destroying, or to make *fires*, Yaffa has lost its greatest convenience."³ Instead of "abundance of trees being still the effect of cultivation," such, on the other hand, has been the effect of these ravages, that many places in Palestine are now "absolutely destitute of fuel." Yet in this devastation, and in all its progress, may be read the literal

¹ Josephus' Wars, book iii. chap. iii. sect. 4.

² Taciti Hist. lib. v. cap. vi.

³ Volney's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 332, 333.

fulfilment of the prophecy, which not only described the desolate cities of Judea as a *pasture of flocks*, and as places for the calf to feed and lie down, and consume the branches thereof; but which, with equal truth, also declared, *when the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off; the women come and set them on fire:*

For it is a people of no understanding. “The most simple arts are in a state of barbarism. The sciences are *totally* unknown.”¹

While such, in literal confirmation of the prophecy, is the testimony of Volney, Burckhardt as unconsciously and incidentally remarks, that such an undertaking as that of clearing the rubbish which prevents water from flowing into an ancient cistern, in order to render it useful to themselves, is “an undertaking far beyond the views of the wandering Arabs.” The manner in which they destroy a whole tree that the *withered branches* may be broken off and set on fire, has been already noticed. And reckless as they are of all but their immediate wants, many a goodly tree has thus fallen, that the withered boughs might, night after night, supply fuel for their fires, till no fruit or shelter be found on the desolated spot; and where such a practice prevails, the bare desert is extended over other plains than that of Sharon. But the Bedouins who kindle their fires at the roots of the finest trees, are not the only inhabitants who give this predicted proof, that the inhabitants of the land are *a people of no understanding*. Near to the village of Sandianeh, on the south-east base of the range of Carmel, where, from the abundance of wood, the pruning-knife would supply fuel for a far larger population, one of the finest oaks, ten feet in circumference, had been burnt at the root, around which lay some of the branches withering into firewood. Close by the sources of the Jordan, as they

¹ Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 442.

gush copiously from the ground, amidst all but impenetrable thickets of brambles, and other thorny plants, which a little art would convert into heaps of brushwood, the writer measured a magnificent oak, upwards of fifteen feet in circumference, which was burnt close to the ground to the depth of three feet and a half, or nearly from side to side; and hence, though containing solid wood enough to floor a mansion, was fast withering away, that its branches might be broken off to form *fires* for worse than Goths who had no sense to convert the noble tree to any better use, nor ingenuity to form an axe to fell it, nor *understanding* or taste to spare the finest oak that shaded the fountain of Jordan; while in strange contrast, they let alone the *briers* that flourish luxuriantly on the site of Dan, and that were to come up upon the cities of Israel. In the north of Syria we saw thousands of pines that had been burnt at the root, whose large and once lofty stems, that would well have formed masts for many navies, were rotting on the ground, after the *branches* had been *broken off*. Causes are thus visible at this day, which, though originating in ignorance, as well as in the ravages of contending factions and secret mischief—solve the mystery of bare and desolated plains, where even fruit-trees were proverbial for their abundance. Judea, in the days of Josephus, had abundance of trees, and was full of autumnal fruit. But now, with very limited exceptions, its hills are bare; and branches are broken off where trees are not suffered to grow to any height. On his first visit to Jerusalem, the author, seeing several women carrying on their heads loads of branches into that city—where Solomon made cedars like the sycamores in the valley for abundance—was informed, on questioning his friend Mr Nicolayson, that such, except for ovens, was the only fuel. On his second visit, on the way from Jerusalem to Hebron, he met two women with loads of firewood *burnt*

at the ends and withered, who were followed by two men with four asses similarly laden; and he passed, in some places, many bushes of the evergreen oak, several of the largest of which, the earliest prey, had been burnt at the root, and the wood carried away; and the region that, with partial exceptions, was stripped of its covering, seemed to be spreading farther and farther from Jerusalem, as from other villages in the land not yet desolated by the Bedouins.

Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers, &c. Mohammedan destroyers of Syria, to whom it was unlawful to drink "the fruit of the vine," caused the vines to be rooted up, and way was thus made for thorns and briers to replace them. Terraced hills that were previously covered with the shadows of the vine, and dropped down new wine, have now these base substitutes as their only clothing, scarcely covering their nakedness. And the time is come, and long has been, that *every place where there were a thousand vines at a thousand silverlings, it is for briers and thorns.* "The earth," says Volney, "produces only *briers and wormwood.*"¹ A thorny shrub (*merar*) abounds throughout the desolated hills and plains of Palestine. Some of the former are so closely beset, in many places, with thorns, that they can only be ascended with great difficulty; and in many places, especially in the richest watered spots, a profusion of matted thorny plants present an impenetrable barrier: and briers sometimes cannot be counted, where each of a thousand vines had once its price. "The whole district of Tiberias," well adapted for the cultivation of the vine, and embracing some of the most fertile regions of Syria, is, in the words of Burckhardt, "covered with the thorny shrub *merar.*"²

*Your highways shall be desolate.*³ *The highways lie*

¹ Ruins, p. 9.

² Burckhardt's Syria, p. 333.

³ Levit. xxvi. 22.

*waste; the wayfaring man ceaseth.*¹ So great must have been the intercourse, in ancient times, between the populous and numerous cities of Judea, and so much must that intercourse have been increased by the frequent and regular journeyings, from every quarter, of multitudes going up to Jerusalem to worship, in observance of the rites, and in obedience to the precepts of their law, that scarcely any country ever possessed such means of crowded highways, or any similar reason for abounding so much in wayfaring men. In the days of Isaiah, who uttered the latest of these predictions, "the land was full of horses, neither was there any end of their chariots." And there not only subsist to this day in the land of Judea, numerous remains of paved ways formed by the Romans at a much later period, and "others evidently *not* Roman;"² but among the precious literary remains of antiquity which have come down to our times, three Roman itineraries are to be numbered, that can here be confidently appealed to. From these, and from the testimony of Arrian and Diodorus Siculus, as well as of Josephus and Eusebius, it appears, as Reland has clearly shown, that in Palestine, long after it came under the power of the Romans, and after it was greatly debased from its ancient glory, there were forty-two different highways, (*viæ publicæ*), all being distinctly specified, which intersected it in various directions.³ There were, besides, Roman roads from Antioch on the north, from Ctesiphon upon the Euphrates, on the east, and from Akaba on the Red Sea, on the south, to Jerusalem. Yet the prophecy is literally true. "In the interior part of the country there are neither great roads, nor canals, nor even bridges over the greatest part of the rivers and torrents, however necessary they may be in winter. Between town and town there are neither posts

¹ Isaiah xxxiii. 8.

² General Straton's MS.

³ Relandi *Palestina ex monumentis veteribus illustrata*, tom. i. lib. ii. cap. iii. iv. v. pp. 405, 425.

nor public conveyances. Nobody travels alone, from the insecurity of the roads. One must wait for several travellers who are going to the same place, or take advantage of the passage of some great man who assumes the office of protector, but is more frequently the oppressor of the caravan. The roads in the mountains are extremely bad; and the inhabitants are so far from levelling them, that they endeavour to make them more rugged, in order, as they say, to cure the Turks of their desire to introduce their cavalry. It is remarkable that there is not a waggon or a cart in all Syria."¹ "There are," continues Volney, "no inns anywhere. The lodgings in the khans (or places of reception for travellers) are cells where you find nothing but bare walls, dust, and sometimes scorpions. The keeper of the khan gives the traveller the key and a mat, and he provides himself the rest. He must therefore carry with him his bed, his kitchen utensils, and even his provisions; for frequently not even bread is to be found in the villages."² "There are no carriages in the country," says another traveller, "under any denomination."³ "Among the hills of Palestine," according to a third witness, "the road is impassable; and the traveller finds himself among a set of infamous and ignorant thieves, who would cut his throat for a farthing, and rob him of his money for the mere pleasure of doing it."⁴ "Generally speaking," says Dr Bowring, in the Parliamentary Report, "the roads in Syria are in a deplorable condition; in the rainy season, indeed, travelling is almost impossible. I understand that roads are scarcely, if ever, repaired. Wheel-carriages, of course, cannot be employed."⁵ "Roads for wheeled carriages," says Mr Stanley, "are now unknown in any part of Palestine."⁶ Every traveller can bear witness to the same fact. In a

¹ Volney's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 417, 419.

² Ibid. pp. 417-419.

³ Wilson's Travels, p. 100.

⁴ Richardson's Travels, vol. ii. p. 225.

⁵ Report of Syria, p. 46.

⁶ Stanley, p. 134.

country where there is a total want of wheel-carriages of every description, *the highways*, however excellent and numerous they once might have been, must *lie waste*; and where such dangers have to be encountered at every step, and such privations at every stage, it is not now to be wondered that the *way-faring man ceaseth*. But let the disciples of Volney, and others besides them, tell by what dictates of human wisdom the whole of his description of these existing facts was summed up, in a brief sentence, by Moses and Isaiah; by the former, thirty-three, and, by the latter, twenty-five centuries past.

*I will send wild beasts among you which shall rob you of your children and destroy your cattle!*¹ *I will make thee waste,—and I will send upon you evil beasts, &c.*² Palestine, to this day, is overrun by wild beasts. Hyenas, lynxes, wild boars, bears, foxes, wolves, and jackals abound both in the mountains and plains. After sunset the Bedouin fires, especially in the south, where flocks abound, are seen blazing at various distances over the face of the country, in order to save the cattle, gathered together, from being devoured by the wild beasts. Sleeping in a tent at Nabulus, the author was wakened by the howlings of wild beasts, and the responding and mingled barking of dogs. On the sea-shore, at the foot of Carmel, two lynxes were seen late at night at the door of an adjoining tent. And though detached from the other mountains of Judea, and situated on the sea-side, Carmel is still, as it has long been, “a habitation of wild beasts.”³ “There are panthers, hyenas, and wild boars on the mountain.”⁴ The writer was there informed by Lord Rokeby that one of his servants had seen many hyenas at Jenin, of which he counted sixteen; and another stated that the number was immense. And, at the

¹ Levit. xxvi. 22.

² Ezek. v. 14, 17.

³ Mariti's Travels, vol. ii. p. 140.

⁴ The Crescent and the Cross, vol. ii. p. 122.

same time, Lord Claude Hamilton stated that, on the plain of Jericho and the banks of the Jordan, he had seen wild boars and innumerable traces of them. Even in the day time, the wolf, the fox, the wild boar, the jackal, and the hyena, are occasionally seen (as may here be personally testified,) by the passing traveller. As Mr Buckingham was travelling on the east of the Jordan, near to the ruined town of Fahaez, two large boars, seemingly ferocious, and wild as any he had seen, rushed forth from the surrounding woody thickets; and near to Zey, another ruined town, overgrown with trees, a place in which there was *abundance of pines*, was, he was assured, a favourite haunt of *wild boars*, which he could easily credit, "as there were a number of places then visible in which they had very recently muzzled up the fresh earth in search of roots as food."¹ The woods that fringe the Jordan are the resort of wild boars. "In the *wooded parts* of Mount Tabor are wild boars and ounces."² The Lord hath not yet returned to visit the vineyard which his own right hand did plant; and of the land of Judea, which he gave to the seed of Abraham by an everlasting covenant, it may literally be said, *The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it.*³ But looking beyond the time of these grievous desolations, the promise stands sure, "I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods."⁴ But to this day the prophetic denunciation retains its undiminished as unrepealed power.

Thou shalt carry much seed into the field, and shalt gather but little in: for the locust shall consume it—all thy trees and fruit of thy land shall the locust consume. That which the palmer-worm hath left hath the locust

¹ Buckingham's Travels among the Arab Tribes, pp. 64, 121, 122.

² Burckhardt, p. 335.

³ Psalm lxxx. 13.

⁴ Ezek. xxxiv. 25.

*eaten ; and that which the locust hath left hath the canker-worm eaten ; and that which the canker-worm hath left hath the caterpillar¹ eaten. “It was,” says Burckhardt at Naeme, east of the lake of Tiberias, in the plains of Bashan, “that I saw for the first time, a swarm of locusts ; they so completely covered the surface of the ground, that my horse killed numbers of them at every step, whilst I had the greatest difficulty in keeping from my face those which rose up and flew about.” He describes one species, the flying locust, that feeds only upon the leaves of *trees* and vegetables, and the wild herbs of the desert, sparing the wheat and barley : and another species, the devouring locust, “which devour whatever vegetation they meet with, and are the terror of the husbandman.” He was told that the offspring of the former produced in Syria partake of the voracity of the latter, and like them prey upon the crops of grain.³ What the one leaves the other eats : and both the leaves of the *trees of the field* and the *fruits of the land* are thus consumed by the locusts. In the mountains of Gilead, the writer (in 1844) saw the plants on the ground covered with locusts ; and in the plain, in the way to Damascus, so closely did they cover them, that as those who accompanied him passed through them in a line, a cloud of locusts arose along it, and diverging for a little from the path, he was soon forced to resume it, as the locusts rose so thickly around him that it was impossible to defend his face as they flew *to and fro*, when raised from the ground which they literally covered. In the following year, “the want of rain rendered the Hauran a desert ; and the locusts overspread the land like a cloud, eating and devouring everything before them.”⁴*

¹ “*Chasil*, alterum locusti genus,” another species of locust. Arius Montanus.

² Deut. xxviii. 38, 42. Joel i. 4.

³ Burckhardt’s Syria, p. 238.

⁴ Letter from the Rev. Mr Graham, Damascus. Missionary Record of the Free Church of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 258.

The spoilers are come upon all high places through the wilderness. The robbers shall enter into it, &c. The land of Israel has not only been given into the hands of strangers for a prey, and unto the wicked of the earth for a spoil, as foreign nations have successively subjugated and despoiled it; but it has also been the prey of bordering marauders, to whose assaults it has for ages been exposed. "These precautions, on the part of travellers, are above all necessary in the countries exposed to the Arabs, such as Palestine and the whole frontier of the desert."¹ "The Arabs are plunderers of the cultivated lands, and robbers on the highroads.—On the slightest alarm the Arabs cut down their (the peasants') harvests, seize their flocks, &c. The peasants with good cause call them thieves. The Arab makes his incursions against hostile tribes, or seeks plunder in the country or on the highways. He became a *robber* from greediness, and such is in fact his present character. A plunderer rather than a warrior, the Arab attacks only to despoil."² Such is the systematic spoliation and robbery to which the inhabitants of Palestine have been subjected for ages. Mr Stanley's testimony may be here added: "In Greece and Italy and Spain, it is the mountainous tract which is beset with banditti—the level country which is safe. In Palestine, on the contrary, the mountain tracts are comparatively secure, though infested by *villages of hereditary ruffians* here and there; but the plains, with hardly an exception, are more or less dangerous. . . . The Bedouin tribes are the corsairs of *the wilderness*. Far up the plains of Philistia and Sharon come the Arabs of the Tih; deep into the centre of Palestine, into the plain of Esdraelon, especially when the harvest has left the fields clear for pasturage, come the Arabs of the Haurân and of Gilead. But now, like the sands of their own deserts which engulf the monuments of Egypt,

¹ Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 417.

² Ibid. chap. xxiii.

no longer defended by a watchful and living population, they have broken in upon the country far and near; and in the total absence of solitary dwelling-places—in the gathering together of all the settled inhabitants into villages, and in the walls which, as at Jerusalem, enclose the cities round, with locked gates and guarded towers—we see the effect of the constant terror which they inspire.”¹

The inhabitants of Jerusalem, and of the land of Israel shall eat their bread with carefulness, and drink their water with astonishment, that her land may be desolate from all that is therein, because of the violence of all them that dwell therein. “In the great cities” (in Syria, none of which are in the Holy Land) “the people have much of that dissipated and careless air which they usually have with us, because there, as well as here,” says Volney, alluding to France, “inured to suffering from habit, and devoid of reflection from ignorance, they enjoy a kind of security. Having nothing to lose, they are in no dread of being plundered. The merchant, on the contrary, lives in a state of perpetual alarm, under the double apprehension of acquiring no more, and losing what he possesses. He trembles lest he should attract the attention of rapacious authority, which would consider an air of satisfaction as a proof of opulence and the signal for extortion. The same dread prevails throughout the villages, where every peasant is afraid of exciting the envy of his equals, and the avarice of the Aga and his soldiers. In such a country, where the subject is perpetually watched by a despoiling government, he must assume a serious countenance for the same reason that he wears ragged clothes;”² or, as the description might appropriately have been concluded, in the very words of the prophet, “because of the violence of them that dwell therein.”

They shall be ashamed of your revenues. “From the

¹ Stanley, pp. 135, 136.

² Volney's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 477, 478.

state of the contributions of each pachalic, it appears that the annual sum paid by Syria into the Kasna, or treasury of the Sultan, amounts to 2345 purses; viz.

For Aleppo.....	800 purses.
Tripoli.....	750
Damascus	45
Acre.....	750
Palestine.....	—

2345 purses;

which are equal to 2,931,250 livres, or £122,135 sterling." After the specification of some incidental sources of revenue, it is added, "we cannot be far from the truth, if we compute the total of the Sultan's revenue from Syria to be 7,500,000 livres,"¹ (£312,500 sterling,) or less than the third part of one million sterling, and less than a seventh part of what it yielded, in tribute, unto Egypt, long after the prophecies were sealed. This is the whole amount that a government which has reached the acme of despotism, and which accounts pillage a right and all property its own, can extort from impoverished Syria. But, insignificant as this sum is, as the revenues of those extensive territories which included in ancient times several opulent and powerful states, the greater part must be deducted from it, before estimating the pitiful pittance, which, under the name of revenue, its oppressive masters can now drain from the land of Israel. A single glance at the preceding statement affords the obvious means of distinguishing the comparative desolation and poverty of the different provinces of Syria. And the least unproductive of these in revenue, the pachalics of Aleppo and Tripoli, and a considerable portion of what now forms the pachalic of Acre, were not included within the boundaries of ancient Judea. Palestine, con-

¹ Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 460.

taining the ancient territory of Philistia, and part of Judea, was then gifted in whole, by the Sultan, to two individuals. The very extensive pachalic of Damascus, so unproductive of revenue, includes Jerusalem, and a great proportion of ancient Judea; so that of it, even with greater propriety than of the rest, it may be said, *they shall be ashamed of your revenues*. Under the Egyptian government of Mehemet Ali, the revenues of Syria, though increased, came far short of the expenditure. "It cannot be doubted," says Dr Bowring, "that the possession of Syria is very onerous, in a pecuniary point of view, to the Pacha. It is the generally received opinion that the 35,000 purses (£175,000 sterling) which are paid in tribute to the Porte, are (were) usually paid by Egypt. Thus an enormous amount of the surplus revenues of the Viceroy's territories in Africa are swallowed up by his Asiatic possessions. Large amounts are imported into Syria, and from Egypt."¹

I will bring your sanctuaries into desolation. I will destroy the sanctuaries of Israel. I will destroy your high places. The holy places shall be defiled. The testimony of the sceptical Gibbon may here be adduced in literal illustration of both these predictions, "After the final *destruction of the stately temple* of the Jewish nation by the arms of Titus and Hadrian, *a ploughshare was drawn over the consecrated ground, as a sign of perpetual interdiction*. Sion was deserted, and the vacant space of the lower city was filled with the public and private edifices of the Ælian colony, which spread over the adjacent hill of Calvary. *The holy places were polluted* with the monuments of idolatry; and either by design or accident, *a chapel was dedicated to Venus*, on the spot which had been sanctified by the death and resurrection of Christ."² Omar, on the first conquest of Jerusalem by the Mohammedans, erected a mosque on the

¹ Parliamentary Report, p. 25.

² Gibbon's Hist. vol. iv. p. 100, c. 23.

site of the temple of Solomon : and jealous as the God of Israel is, that his glory be not given to another, the unseemly, and violent, and sometimes bloody contentions among professing Christians—that to this day can only be suppressed by the thongs of the police of the Moslem governor of Jerusalem—in the chief of their holy days, and in the church of the holy sepulchre around the reputed tomb of the Author of the faith they dishonour,—bear not a feebler testimony, in the present day, than the preceding fact has borne for ages to the truth of this prediction. The frenzied zeal of crusading Christians could not long rescue the holy sepulchre from the heathen who defiled it, though, with that intent, Europe then poured like a torrent upon Asia. But in the land called holy, other *sanctuaries* than the temple of Jerusalem have been brought into desolation : and the *holy places* have been polluted with other things than the monuments of idolatry, or religious rites akin to pagan orgies, but disgraceful to the Christian name. *I will bring the worst of the heathen and they shall possess their houses : I will also make the pomp of the strong to cease ; and their holy places shall be defiled.*¹ The *high places* of Israel have long been *destroyed*. *Heathens* have possessed the houses of the land, and Mohammedans still hold as their own most of those that remain. *The pomp of the strong has ceased ; the forts and towers are for dens :* but the most magnificent ruins are those of temples. Pagan sanctuaries that succeeded the high-places of Israel, and churches without number, that also succeeded the synagogues of the land, have alike been *brought to desolation*. Tadmor, (Palmyra,) built by Solomon, has its ruined temples, to which in modern times it owes its renown. That of Baalbec is a still more splendid ruin ; and the sun, to whose idolatrous worship it was erected, ripens the wild plants that have come up on its

¹ Ezek. vii. 24.

broken images, and cover its buried altars. These "two renowned remains of antiquity," that once towered in grandeur to the honour of Baal, are, in their *desolation*, witnesses for the living God. Geraza, too, has both its ruined temples and churches. *Thistles* in that land have *come over* many other *altars* than those of Bethel. One upwards of ten feet high was measured by the writer, beside a fallen *altar* in a ruined church at Gerash, where Christian emblems are conjoined with the pagan tokens of empty niches in broken walls; and another *altar* lies in the untrodden street. The *altars* of Samaria have been cast down like its other stones into the valley, and lie there, as may be seen, where the beasts of the field do eat. Those of Cæsarea Philippi lie indiscriminately among its ruins, and *there does the calf feed, and there does he lie down, and consume the branches* that shadow them.—Though he crossed not the Jordan, nor traversed the land, Maundrell relates, in his *journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem*, that "perhaps not fewer than a hundred ruined churches came in our way."¹ Many a desolate sanctuary is now a lair for beasts: and many *holy places* are in the strictest sense literally *defiled* to this day, even where villages still exist, and heathens, and others not better than they, possess houses where cities stood. The cathedral of Tartous, or Orthosia,—a hundred and thirty feet long, ninety-three broad, and sixty-one high—the most entire in all the land, with its walls, columns, arches, aisles, and roof unbroken, is still, as we saw it, what it was a hundred and sixty years ago when visited by Maundrell, as since by others, "a stall for cattle."² The cathedral of Cæsarea is as open to wild beasts and as fitted for their dens as any of its towers—and its large vault is occupied by myriads of fleas. The walls of the principal ruin of Athlith, once those

¹ Maundrell's Travels, p. 65.

² Ibid. p. 25. Pococke, Buckingham.

of a large church, enclose hovels and heaps of dung. The niches in the walls of the cathedral of Tyre, not empty now as seen by former travellers, seem to be hid from view by an immense dunghill, accumulated, in continued *defilement* of one of the most celebrated of the *holy places* in the land; while, in striking contrast, according to another prophetic word, fishers, at a few yards' distance, *spread their nets*, and are still spreading them, over the ruins of Old Tyre buried *in the midst of the sea*, on a place bare like the top of a rock, and clean as the sand that is washed by the ocean. *The high-places are desolate. The sanctuaries are destroyed. The altars are laid waste. The idols are broken and have ceased. And the holy places are defiled.*

Instead of viewing separately each special prediction, the prophecies respecting the desolation of the land of Judea are so abundant, that several may be grouped together; and their meaning is so clear that any explanatory remarks would be superfluous. Nor is the evidence of their complete fulfilment indistinct, or difficult to be found; for Volney illustrates six predictions in a single sentence, to which he subjoins a reflection, not less confirmatory than the whole, of prophetic inspiration.

"I will destroy your high places,—and bring your SANCTUARIES into desolation.¹ The PALACES shall be forsaken.² I will destroy the remnant of the sea-coast.³ I will make your cities waste. The multitude of the city shall be left, the habitation forsaken, &c. The land shall be utterly spoiled.⁴ I will make the land more desolate than the wilderness. "The temples are thrown down—the palaces demolished—the ports filled up—the towns destroyed—and the earth, stripped of inhabitants, seems a dreary burying-place."⁵

¹ Lev. xxvi. 30, 31.

² Isaiah xxxii. 14.

³ Ezek. xxv. 16.

⁴ Isaiah xxiv. 3.

⁵ Volney's Ruins, chap. xi. p. 8.

Such is one sentence of a book which was written to disprove and to deride revelation, and which, not less perhaps than any other, has caused or confirmed the scepticism of innumerable thousands. And having tendered this testimony, Volney, taking God's name in vain, thus exclaims, in confirmation of his word, "Good God! from whence proceed such melancholy revolutions? For what cause is the fortune of these countries so *strikingly changed*? Why are so many *cities destroyed*? Why is not that ancient population reproduced and perpetuated?—I wandered over the country; I traversed the provinces; I enumerated the kingdoms of Damascus and Idumea, of Jerusalem and Samaria. This Syria, SAID *I to myself*, now almost depopulated, then contained a hundred flourishing cities, and abounded with towns, villages, and hamlets. What are become of so many productions of the hands of man? What are become of those ages of abundance and of life?" &c.¹ Seeking to be wise, men become fools, when they trust to their own vain imaginations, and will not look to that word of God, which is as able to confound the wise, as to give understanding to the simple. These words, from the lips of a great advocate of infidelity, proclaim the certainty of the truth which he was too blind or bigoted to see. For not more unintentionally or unconsciously do *many* illiterate Arab *pastors*, or herdsmen, verify one prediction, while they literally *tread* Palestine *under foot*, than Volney the academician, himself verifies another, while, speaking in his own name, and the spokesman also of others, he thus confirms the unerring truth of God's holy word, by what he *said*, as well as by describing what he saw. *The generation to come of your children that shall rise up after you, and* THE STRANGER THAT SHALL COME FROM A FAR LAND, *shall say, when they see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses which the*

¹ Volney's Ruins, chap. xi. p. 8.

*Lord hath laid upon it,—Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto the land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger?*¹

It is no "secret malediction," spoken of by Volney, which God has pronounced against Judea. It is the curse of a broken covenant that rests upon the land—the consequences of the iniquities of the people, not of those only who have been plucked from off it, and scattered throughout the world, but of those also that dwell therein. The ruins of empires originated not from the regard which mortals paid to revealed religion, but from causes diametrically the reverse. Neither Jews nor Christians who possessed a revelation, were the desolators; under them Judea flourished. The destruction of Jerusalem, and of the cities of Palestine, was the work of the Romans, who were pagan idolaters; and the devastation, in more recent ages, was perpetuated by the Saracens and Turks, believers in the impostor Mohammed, and the desolations were wrought by the enemies of the Mosaic and Christian dispensations. The desolations are not of divine appointment, but only as they have followed the violations of the laws of God, or have arisen from thence. The virtual renunciation of a holy faith brought on destruction. And none other curses have come upon the land than those that are written in the book. The character and condition of the people are not less definitely marked, than the features of the land that has been smitten with a curse because of their iniquities. And when the unbeliever asks, wherefore hath the Lord done this unto the land, the same word which foretold that the question would be put, supplies an answer and assigns the cause. *Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers, &c.*²

The land is defiled under the inhabitants thereof;

¹ Deut. xxix. 22–24.

² Deut. xxix. 25.

*because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant: therefore hath the curse devoured the land,*¹ &c. These expressive words, while they declare the cause of the judgments and desolations, denote also the great depravity of those who were to inhabit the land of Judea during the time of its desolation, and while its ancient inhabitants were to be "scattered abroad." And although the ignorance of those who dwell therein may be pitied, their degeneracy will not be denied. The ferocity of the Turks, the predatory habits of the Arabs, the abject state of the few poor Jews who are suffered to dwell in the land of their fathers, the base superstitions of the different Christian sects,—the frequent contentions that subsist among such a mingled and diversified people, and the gross ignorance and great depravity that prevail throughout the whole, have all sadly changed and stained the moral aspect of that country, which from sacred remembrances is denominated the Holy Land,—have converted that region, where alone in all the world, and during many ages, the only living and true God was worshipped, and where alone the pattern of perfect virtue was ever exhibited to human view or in the human form, into one of the most degraded countries of the globe, and, in appropriate terms, may well be said to have *defiled the land*. And it has been defiled throughout many an age. The Father of mercies afflicteth not willingly, nor grieveth the children of men. Sin is ever the precursor of the actual judgments of Heaven. It was on account of their idolatry and wickedness that the ten tribes were earliest plucked from off the land of Israel. The blood of Jesus, according to their prayer, and the full measure of their iniquity, according to their doings, were upon the Jews and upon their children. Before they were extirpated from that land which their

¹ Isaiah xxiv. 5, 6.

iniquities had defiled, it was drenched with the blood of more than a million of their race. Judea afterwards had a partial and temporary respite from desolation, when Christian churches were established there. But in that land, the nursery of Christianity, the seeds of its corruption, or perversion, began soon to appear. The moral power of religion decayed, its *simplicity* was abandoned, and the nominal disciples of a pure faith "broke the everlasting covenant."¹ The doctrine of Mohammed,—the Koran or the sword,—was the scourge and the cure of apostacy; but all the native impurities of the Mohammedan creed succeeded to a grossly corrupted form of Christianity. Since that period, hordes of Saracens, Egyptians, Fatimites, Tartars, Mamelukes, Turks, (a combination of names of unmatched barbarism, at least in modern times,) have, for the space of twelve hundred years, *defiled the land* of the children of Israel with iniquity and with blood. And in very truth the prophecy savours not in the least of hyperbole,—*the worst of the heathen shall possess their houses. And the holy places shall be defiled.* But the defilement of the land, no less than that of the holy places, is not yet cleansed away. And Judea is still defiled to this hour, not only by oppressive rulers, but by an unprincipled and a lawless people. "The barbarism of Syria," says Volney, "is complete."² "I have often reflected," says Burckhardt, in describing the dishonest conduct of a *Greek priest* in the Hauran, (but in words that admit of too general an application,) "that if the English penal laws were suddenly promulgated in this country, there is scarcely any man in business, or who has money dealings with others, who would not be liable to transportation before the end of the first six months."³ "Under the name of

¹ Isaiah xxiv. 5.

² Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 442.

³ Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 89.

Christianity, every degrading superstition and profane rite, equally remote from the enlightened tenets of the gospel and the dignity of human nature, are professed and tolerated. The pure gospel of Christ, everywhere the herald of civilization and of science, is almost as little known in the Holy Land as in California or New Holland. A series of legendary traditions, mingled with remains of Judaism, and the wretched phantasies of illiterate ascetics, may now and then exhibit a glimmering of heavenly light; but if we seek for the effects of Christianity in the land of Canaan, we must look for that period, when the desert shall blossom as the rose, and the wilderness become a fruitful field.”¹ Maundrell specially remarks, concerning the hundred churches which he and those who accompanied him saw, that “though their other parts were totally demolished, yet the east end we always found standing and tolerably entire.”² These very walls and any others of churches that still stand, sometimes solitary amidst fallen cities, are all witnesses, by the niches, like those of heathen temples, which they hold up to view, that the curse has not fallen causeless; but that the *predicted* cause of the desolating judgments is as clear, as are the niches—or other Christian emblems (falsely so called)—in the walls, or the words of the text; and may be as plainly seen as are the *altars* that lie among the ruins. *The land is defiled under the inhabitants thereof, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant: therefore hath the curse devoured the land, and*

They that dwell therein are desolate. “The government of the Turks in Syria is a pure military despotism, that is, the bulk of the inhabitants are subject to the caprices of a faction of armed men, who dispose of everything according

¹ Clarke's Travels, vol. ii. p. 405.

² Maundrell's Travels, p. 65.

to their interest and fancy." In each government the pacha is an absolute despot. In the villages, the inhabitants, limited to the mere necessities of life, have no arts but those without which they cannot subsist." "There is no safety without the towns, nor security within their precincts."¹
And

Few men left. While their character is thus depraved and their condition miserable, their number is also small indeed, as the inhabitants of so extensive and fertile a region. After estimating the number of inhabitants in Syria, in general, Volney remarks: "So feeble a population in so excellent a country may well excite *our astonishment*, but this will be increased, if we compare the present number of inhabitants with that of ancient times. We are informed by the philosophical geographer, Strabo, that the territories of Yamnia and Yoppa, in Palestine alone, were formerly so populous as to bring forty thousand armed men into the field. At present they could scarcely furnish three thousand. From the accounts we have of Judea, in the time of Titus, which are to be esteemed tolerably accurate, that country must have contained four millions of inhabitants. If we go still farther back into antiquity, we shall find the same populousness among the Philistines, the Phœnicians, and in the kingdoms of Samaria and Damascus."² Thus, on a comparison of the ancient and the existing population, that country does not now contain above a tenth part of the number of inhabitants, which it plentifully supported exclusively from their industry and from the rich resources of its own luxuriant soil, for many successive centuries; and how could it possibly have been imagined that this identical land would ever yield so scanty a subsistence to the desolate dwellers therein, and that there would be so *few men left?*

¹ Volney's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 370, 376, 380.

² Ibid. vol. ii. p. 366.

"The *land* is defiled under the *inhabitants* thereof, because *they* have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant, *therefore* hath the curse *devoured the land*, and they that dwell therein are desolate, and *few men left!*" The testimony of a single witness, in few words, supplies at once an adequate illustration of all these prophecies. "The vast plains," says Mr Warburton, "that lie between the mountains and the sea, are very partially cultivated; but luxuriant patches of corn, and the rich grass that grew wild, proved how readily it could bring forth abundance; and that it was the inhabitants, and not the soil, that lay under the curse. Once, twenty millions of people, it is said, dwelt in plenty and prosperity, where now some 1,800,000 find a scanty sustenance. The more I see of Turkish rule, the more admirably does that rule appear adapted to accomplish a denouncing prophecy!"¹

*The mirth of the tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth.*² Instrumental music was common among the Jews. The tabret, and the harp, the cymbal, the psaltery, and the viol, and other instruments of music, are often mentioned as in familiar use among the Israelites, and regularly formed a great part of the service of the temple. At the period when the prediction was delivered, the harp, the viol, and the tabret, and pipe, and wine were in their feasts; and even though the Jews have long ceased to be a nation, the use of these instruments has not ceased from among them. But in the once happy land of Judea, the voice of mirthful music is at rest. In a general description of the state of the arts and sciences in Syria, including the whole of the Holy Land, Volney remarks, that adepts in music are very rarely to be met with. "They have no music but vocal; for they

¹ The Crescent and the Cross, vol. ii. pp. 132, 133.

² Isaiah xxiv. 8.

neither know nor esteem *instrumental*; and they are in the right, for such instruments as they have, not excepting their flutes, are detestable.”¹ *The mirth of the tabrets ceaseth, the joy of the harp ceaseth.*

But this is not the sole instance in which the melancholy features of that desolate country seem to be transferred to the minds of its inhabitants. And the plaintive language of the prophet (the significancy of which might well have admitted of some slight modification, if one jot or tittle could pass away till all be fulfilled) is true to the very letter, when set side by side, unaided by one syllable of comment, with the words of a bold and avowed unbeliever.

*All the merry-hearted do SIGH;—they shall not drink wine with a song;—all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone.*² “Their performance” (singing) “is accompanied with sighs and gestures. They may be said to excel most in the *melancholy* strain. To behold an Arab with his head inclined, his hand applied to his ear, his eyebrows knit, his eyes languishing; to hear his plaintive tones, his *sighs* and sobs, it is almost impossible to refrain from tears.”³ If any further illustration of the prediction be requisite, the same ill-fated narrator of facts exhibits anew the visions of the prophet. From his description (chap. xl.) of the manner and character of the inhabitants of Syria, it is obvious that melancholy is a predominating feature. “Instead of that open and cheerful countenance, which we either naturally possess or assume, their behaviour is serious, austere, and melancholy. They rarely laugh; and the gaiety of the French appears to them a fit of delirium. When they speak, it is with deliberation, without gesture, and without passion; they listen without interrupting you; they are silent for whole days together: and by no means pique

¹ Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 439.

² Isaiah xxiv. 7, 9.

³ Volney's Travels, pp. 439, 440.

themselves on supporting conversation. Continually seated, they pass whole days musing, with their legs crossed, their pipes in their mouths, and almost without changing their attitude. The Orientals, in general, have a grave and phlegmatic exterior; a staid and almost listless deportment; and a serious, nay, even sad and melancholy countenance.”¹ Having thus explicitly stated the fact, Volney, by many arguments, equally judicious and just, most successfully combats the idea that the climate and soil are the radical cause of so striking a phenomenon; and after assigning a multiplicity of facts from ancient history, which completely disprove the efficacy of such causes, he instances that of the Jews, “who, limited to a little state, never ceased to struggle for a thousand years against the most powerful empires.”² If the men of these nations were inert,” he adds, “what is activity? If they were active, where then is the influence of climate? Why, in the same countries, where so much energy was displayed in former times, do we at present find such profound indolence?” And having thus relieved the advocate for the inspiration of the Scriptures from the necessity of proving that the contrast in the manner and character of the present and of the ancient inhabitants of Syria is (even now, when the change is become matter of history and observation, and when the circumstances respecting it are known,) incapable of solution from any natural causes, such as by some conceivable possibility might have been foreseen, he proceeds to point out those real, efficacious, and efficient causes, viz. the mode of government, and the state of religion and of the laws, the nature of which no human sagacity could possibly have described, and which came not into existence or operation in the manner in which they have so long continued, for many ages subsequent to

¹ Volney's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 461, 476.

² Ibid. vol. ii. p. 464.

the period when their full and permanent effect was laid open to the full view of the prophets of Israel. The fact, thus clearly predicted and proved, is not only astonishing as referable to the inhabitants of Judea, and as exhibiting a contrast, than which nothing, of a similar kind, can be more complete; but it is so very contradictory to the habits of men and customs of nations, that it is totally inexplicable how, by any human means, such a fact, even singly, could ever have been foretold. From the congregated groups of savages, cheered by their simple instruments of music, exulting in their war-songs, and revelling in their mirth, to the more elegant assemblages of polished society, listening with delight to the triumphs of music; from the huts of the wilderness to the courts of Asia and of Europe; and from the wilds of America, the jungles of India, and even the deserts of central Africa, to the meadows of England, the plains of France, or the valleys of Italy; the experience of mankind in every clime,—except partially where the blasting influence of the crescent is felt,—proclaims as untrue to nature the predicted fact, which actually has been permanently characteristic of the inhabitants of the once happy land of Israel. The fact perhaps would have been but slowly credited, and the synonymous terms of the ample description and of the repeated prophecies might have been reckoned the fiction of a biassed judgment, had a Christian, instead of Volney, been the witness.

*They shall not drink wine with a song. Strong drink shall be BITTER to them that drink it.*¹ The more closely that the author of the *Ruins of Empires* traces the causes in which the desolation of these regions, and the calamities of the inhabitants, originate, he supplies more abundant data for a demonstration that the prophecies respecting them cannot but be Divine. “One of the chief sources,”

¹ Isaiah xxiv. 9.

continues Volney, "of gaiety with us, is the social intercourse of the table, and the use of wine. The Orientals (Syrians) are almost strangers to this double enjoyment. Good cheer would infallibly expose them to extortion, and wine to corporal punishment, from the zeal of the police in enforcing the precepts of the Koran. It is with great reluctance the Mohammedans tolerate the Christians the use of a liquor they envy them."¹ To this statement may be subjoined the more direct but equally unapplied, testimony of recent travellers. "The wines of Jerusalem," says Mr Joliffe, "are most execrable. In a country where every species of vinous liquor is strictly prohibited by the concurrent authorities of law and gospel, a single fountain may be considered of infinitely greater value than many wine-presses."² Mr Wilson relates, that the wine drunk in Jerusalem is probably the very worst to be met with in any country.³ While the intolerance and despotism of the Turks, and the rapacity and wildness of the Arabs, have blighted the produce of Judea, and render abortive all the influence of climate, and all the fertility of that land of vines, the unnatural prohibition of the use of wine, and the rigour with which that prohibition is enforced, have peculiarly operated against the cultivation of the vine, and turned the treading of the wine-press into an odious and unprofitable task. Yet in a country where the vine grows spontaneously, and which was celebrated for the excellence of its wines,⁴ nothing less than the operation of causes unnatural and extreme as these, could have verified the language of prophecy. But in this instance, as truly as in every other, a recapitulation of the prophecies is the best summary of the facts. And, by only changing the future into

¹ Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 480.

² Joliffe's Letters from Palestine, vol. i. p. 184.

³ Wilson's Travels, p. 130.

⁴ Relandi Palestina, pp. 381, 792.

the present and the past, after an interval of two thousand five hundred years, no eye-witness, writing on the spot, could delineate a more accurate representation of the existing state of Judea, than in the very words of Isaiah, in which, as in those of other prophets, the various and desultory observations of travellers are concentrated into a description equally perspicuous and true.

“Many days and years shall ye be troubled;—for the vintage shall fail, the gathering shall not come.—They shall lament for the teats, for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine. Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers; yea, upon all the houses of joy in the joyous city; because the palaces shall be forsaken; the multitude of the city shall be left; the forts and towers shall be for dens for ever, a joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks.¹—The highways lie waste; the way-faring man ceaseth.—The earth (land) mourneth and languisheth;—Sharon is like a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits.² The land shall be utterly emptied and utterly spoiled.—The earth mourneth and fadeth away—it is defiled under the inhabitants thereof, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the land, and they that dwell therein are desolate,—and few men left.—The vine languisheth, all the merry-hearted do sigh.—The mirth of the tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth. They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it. The city of confusion is broken down;—all joy is darkened; the mirth of the land is gone.”³

¹ Isaiah xxxii. 10, 12-14.

² Isaiah xxxiii. 8, 9.

³ Isaiah xxiv. 3-11.

SECTION IV.

THE PREDICTED DEGREE OF DESOLATION.

To the picture of common and general desolation, that no distinguishing feature might be left untouched or untraced by his pencil, the prophet adds:—*When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive-tree, and as the gleaning of grapes when the vintage is done.*¹ *The glory of Jacob shall be made thin, and the fatness of his flesh shall wax lean. And it shall be as when the harvest-man gathereth the corn, and reapeth the ears with his arm; and it shall be as he that gathereth ears in the valley of Rephaim. Yet gleanings shall be left in it, as the shaking of an olive-tree, two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four or five in the outmost fruitful branches thereof, saith the Lord God of Israel.—In that day shall his strong cities be as a forsaken bough, and an uppermost branch WHICH THEY LEFT, BECAUSE OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL.*² When Isaiah saw the glory, as he heard the voice, of the Lord of Hosts, and prophesied, according to his word, of the deep blindness that was to fall on his people Israel, the prophet's question, *Lord, how long?* was thus answered—not by any of the adoring seraphim but by the Lord himself, to whom it was addressed after a ministering angel had laid upon the prophet's lips a live coal from off the altar—*Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land. But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return and shall be eaten (shall undergo a repeated*

¹ Isaiah xxiv. 13.² Isaiah xvii. 4-6, 9.

devastation): *as a teil-tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves: so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof.*¹

There is thus a promised and predicted limit, in degree as in duration, to the desolation of the land, as there is to the judgments on the people. It is written that the Lord will *remember both*. As of the one it is said, "I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in *measure*," &c. "I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the Lord."² And even so, the Lord hath not given up his *pleasant portion* to unmeasured and unlimited desolation. For though the fruitful field be a wilderness, thus hath the Lord said, The whole land shall be desolate; *yet will I not make a full end.*³ As a final question then, not less definite than any of the rest, it may be asked and ascertained, Is the *substance* yet in the land? Is there still a *gleaning* of the glory of Israel? And desolate as the land is—with many a fruitful place like an actual wilderness—is *there yet in it a tenth?*

The substance, in one word, *is in it*, as in a *teil-tree and an oak when they cast their leaves*. As other prophecies similarly bear, *an oak whose leaf fadeth, and a garden that hath no water*, are fitting similitudes of that land which was *the glory of all lands*. Though the cities be waste, and the land be desolate, it is not from the poverty of the soil that the fields are abandoned by the plough, nor from any diminution of its ancient and natural fertility that the land has rested for so many generations. Judea was not forced only by artificial means, or from local and temporary causes, into a luxuriant cultivation, such as a barren country might have been, concerning which it would not have needed a prophet to tell, that if once devastated and abandoned it

¹ Isaiah vi. 11-13.² Jer. xxx. 11. Amos ix. 8.³ Jer. iv. 26, 27.

would ultimately and permanently revert into its original sterility. Palestine at all times held a far different rank among the richest countries of the world ; and it was not a bleak and sterile portion of the earth, nor a land which even many ages of desolation and neglect could impoverish, that God gave, in possession and by covenant, to the seed of Abraham. No longer cultivated as a garden, but left like a wilderness, Judea is indeed greatly changed from what it was ; all that human ingenuity and labour did devise, erect, or cultivate, men have laid waste, and desolate ; the “plenteous goods,” with which it was enriched, adorned, and blessed, have fallen like seared and withered leaves, when their greenness is gone ; and stripped of its “ancient splendour,” it is left as *an oak whose leaf fadeth*. But its inherent sources of fertility are not dried up ; the natural richness of the soil is unblighted ; *the substance is in it* strong as that of the teil-tree or the solid oak, which retain their substance, when they cast their leaves. And as the leafless oak waits throughout winter for the genial warmth of returning spring, to be clothed with renewed foliage, so the once glorious land of Judea is yet full of latent vigour, or of vegetable power strong as ever, ready to shoot forth, even “*better than at their beginnings*,” whenever the sun of heaven shall shine on it again, and the “holy seed” be prepared for being finally “the substance thereof.” *The substance that is in it*, which alone has here to be proved, is, in few words, thus described by an enemy : “The land in the plains is *fat and loamy*, and exhibits every sign of the *greatest fecundity*. . . . Were nature assisted by art, the fruits of the most distant countries might be produced within the distance of twenty leagues.”¹ “Galilee,” says Malte-Brun, “would be a paradise, were it inhabited by an industrious people, under an enlightened government. Vine-

¹ Volney's Travels, vol. i. pp. 308, 317.

stocks are to be seen here a foot and a half in diameter.”¹ “The rocky soil of the ‘hill country,’ which extends beyond Hebron on the south to some distance north of Jerusalem, is,” says Dr Olin, “very susceptible of being restored to profitable cultivation. The innumerable remains of terraces and cisterns, and the ruins of large towns and villages thickly scattered over this romantic region, would clearly demonstrate, even if both sacred and profane history were silent on the subject, that it had been densely peopled and highly cultivated. By far the largest portion of this mountain tract is susceptible of being fully restored to its ancient fertility. Anciently these hills were covered with orchards of fruit-trees and vineyards; and the world does not, probably, produce finer grapes, figs, and olives, than are annually gathered about Hebron and Bethlehem. One acre of the flinty surface of the Mount of Olives, carefully tended in olive-trees, would yield more, through the exchanges of commerce, toward her main subsistence, than a much larger tract of the richest Ohio bottoms tilled with corn. . . . I can see no reason why the replanting of the fruit-trees and vineyards of the land of Judah might not enable it to support as large a population as it did in the days of Herod, or of David.”²

The regions also on the east of Jordan are not less fertile naturally; and now that they have been traversed by modern travellers, they are no longer to be ranked as a desert, as if incapable of cultivation. For clearly as crowded ruins betoken a once densely populated country, the fact is as clear that *the substance is in it* for the ample sustenance of as many as ever dwelt within its bounds, and that its most desolated and depopulated regions are but like the leafless oak, as hard and sound in its *substance* as ever. “The peasants of the Haouran,” says Burckhardt, “are

¹ Schulze, in Pallas, cited by Malte-Brun, Geogr. vol. ii. p. 143.

² Dr Olin's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 430, 431.

extremely shy in speaking of the produce of their land, from an apprehension that the stranger's inquiries may lead to new extortions. I have reason to believe, however, that in middling years wheat yields twenty-five fold; in some parts of the Haouran this year (1812) the barley has yielded fifty-fold, and even in some instances eighty. A sheikh assured me—that from twenty mouds of wheat seed he once obtained thirty ghararas,¹ or one hundred and twenty fold. Where abundance of water can be conducted into the fields from neighbouring springs, the soil is again sown after the grain harvest, with vegetables, lentils, pease, sesamums, &c.”² “At El Torra, as in *so many other places* of the Haouran, I saw the most luxuriant wild herbage, through which my horse with difficulty made his way; artificial meadows could hardly be finer than these desert fields; and it is this which renders the Haouran so favourite an abode of the Bedouin. The peasants of Syria are ignorant of the advantage of feeding their cattle with hay, they suffer the superfluous grass to *wither away*,” &c.³ Thus *the substance which is in it* is the very cause why many pastors have trodden, and still tread, the land under foot, from its eastern to its western borders. And such is the harmony between seemingly discordant and diversified prophecies, that *because of the ignorance of them that dwell therein*, the herbs of every field wither, and the grass *withers away*, as declared by the prophet, and described by a most observant and intelligent traveller, who never once alludes to any prediction; but who thus shows how these things are accordant with the fact, that *desert fields* have yet their *substance* in them, while, all uncultivated as they are, they still afford a *pasture for flocks*, not to be surpassed by the finest artificial meadows.

¹ Three rotola and a half make a mound, and eighty mounds a gharara. A rotola is equal to about five and a half pounds English.

² Burekhardt, pp. 296, 297.

³ Ibid. p. 246.

But that the land, with its substance still in it, is like a garden, though without water, and an oak without its leaves, may be further seen in the “fat and loamy soil of the plains,” of which Volney testifies, and in its *depth* also, as in various places we measured it,—where it was cut into by rivers or streamlets, or torrents from the mountains,—eight or ten or twenty feet, and yet no subsoil was disclosed to view;—and more obviously still by the *gleanings* that are left, which show what a *smitten* land still bears. It has now its real as well as prophetic symbols, in *ears* such as those which an ungleaned field of old retained in the best of Israel’s past days, when the crop had been cut down and carried away;—in the solitary clusters, or the single grapes which were found in a vineyard when the vintage was past; and in the outermost branches of a shaken olive with some of its berries left,—as well as in the hardy oak whose substance is in it, though its leaves be faded, or in an unwatered garden that is a garden still. The figures of Scripture are not, like many in other books, only or chiefly, if at all, for embellishment; nor have they there a place that imagination may disport itself with them. But as they elsewhere give to abstract truths a palpable form, they here illustrate the doings, as they are the words, of the Lord, and present a combination of expressive similitudes which render it hard to *wrest* Scripture here, as they visibly exhibit the truths which they reveal. Intelligible as they are, their precise meaning and fixed significancy may be read in other words of holy writ.

“I command thee to do this thing,” said the Lord, by his servant Moses, to the people of Israel. “When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow, that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the

work of thine hands. When thou beatest thine *olive-tree*, thou shalt not go over the boughs again ;—when thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward ; it shall be for the stranger,” &c.¹ “When ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather any grapes of thy vineyard ; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger.”² “And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleanings of thy harvest : thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger : I am the Lord your God.”³

Such was the law, as that of a God of mercy, in Israel ; and such are the express things, each of which was to be the measure, as the similitudes, of the judgments that were to come upon the land—a reaped but ungleaned field, of which the corners were not to be wholly reaped, nor a clean riddance to be made of them, and from which a forgotten sheaf was not to be fetched again ; a beaten olive-tree, of which the boughs were not to be gone over again ;—and, when the vintage was past, an ungleaned vineyard, of which every grape was not to be gathered, but some to be left for the poor and the stranger—as Israel’s people long have been, and as the gleanings of Israel’s land—though long possessed by the worst of the heathen, and reaped by the wicked of the earth—was to be left for them.

These predictions imply, as otherwise declared without a metaphor, that a *small remnant* would be left, and that the Lord would not make a *full end* ; that though the land of Israel should become poor like a field that had been reaped, an olive that had been shaken, and a vineyard when the

¹ Deut. xxiv. 19–21.² Lev. xix. 9, 10.³ Lev. xxiii. 22.

vintage was past, yet some ears, or single sheafs would be left ; a few olives still hanging on a beaten bough ; some grapes, or clusters that once left were not to be gathered, such as grew in the land that was the vineyard of the Lord. And is there yet such a gleaning left of the glory of Israel ? There is. And there could not be any similes more natural, or expressive, or descriptive of the fact.

Nabulus, or Neapolis, is identified with the ancient Sychem or Sychar. There Abraham was first stayed in his pilgrimage ; there he first received the promise of the land unto his seed ; there Jesus, on his way from Judea to Galilee, tarried two days, at the entreaty of its Samaritan inhabitants, many of whom believed on him, though he wrought no miracles among them ; and there—as if a word had dropped down on it from the side of Mount Gerizim, at the foot of which it lies, when Joshua read the *blessings* in the hearing of assembled Israel spread over the valley—the same Divine word that has given its free licence to the curse over all the land, has arrested desolation in its progress ere it reached a *full end* ; for *there* may be seen, as it were, a sheaf which none have fetched from the field that has been reaped, a berry left on the beaten olive, and a cluster of grapes in a gathered vineyard. “It is luxuriously embosomed,” as justly described by Dr Clarke, “in the most delightful and fragrant bowers, half-concealed by rich gardens and by stately trees, collected into groves all around the bold and beautiful valley in which it stands.”¹ “Here,” says Dr Robinson, “a scene of luxuriant and almost unparalleled verdure burst upon our view. The whole valley was filled with gardens of vegetables and orchards of all kinds of fruits, watered by several fountains, which burst forth in various parts, and flow westwards in refreshing streams.”² “We had often read of the verdure and beauty

¹ Clarke, ii. 400, vol. iii. p. 95.

² Vol. iii. p. 95.

of this scene, but it far surpassed our expectations. The town with its cupolas and minarets is literally embosomed in trees.”¹ On the sloping sides of Gerizim as they begin to rise from the plain, on the south-west side of the town, cultivated terraces in close and regular succession are covered with fruit-trees, chiefly the olive. Along the bottom of the mountain and the valley at its base, the foliage is close and luxuriant, the gardens are watered by artificial channels, as well as by the flowing streams, and the trees, some of which are very large, were, as we saw them, loaded with fruit. Pomegranates, olives, figs, apricots, chesnuts, and mulberries abound. Orange-trees, vines, almond-trees, and palms also combine to show in a single spot, with many cultivated fields in the vicinity, how rich are the gleanings of that *glorious land*, in which Israel *lacked not any thing*. Yet, with all its richness, Nabulus is but as the corner of a field, which has not been wholly reaped. The Samaritans, as Jesus was told by a woman of Sychar, said *that men ought to worship in that mountain*, on the top of which stood their temple, now level with the extensive ruins of the city. The greater part of the mountain, which was terraced to its summit, is bare. Over a large portion of its now naked sides, where not precipitous, the soil is rich and sufficiently abundant for the growth of trees to clothe it, even where, as seen from beneath, the fronts of the terraces present nothing but an aspect of sterility. The hills beside Gerizim, when seen from its higher elevation, present to view terraces that run along their sides, and are intersected at right angles by divisions or walls, that seem to have been the boundaries of vineyards, and thus indicate a corresponding fruitfulness in ancient times, that has not been spared like the valley beneath.

The plain of Sharon, though a wide-spread wilderness,

¹ Narrative by Bonar and M'Cheyne.

has yet some corners that have not been reaped — some gleanings that are left. The environs of Jaffa are covered with rich and beautiful gardens and orchards, chiefly filled with orange-trees, loaded, as we saw them, with their green and golden fruit. There are many palms, fig-trees, and sycamores: and the water-melons of Jaffa are plentiful, and not to be surpassed, as they are celebrated, for their excellence. The gardens and groves extend over several square miles. Beyond them and the circumjacent cultivated lands, the ground, though untilled, is no less fertile naturally, and is diversified on the south with little hills that once rejoiced on every side; and in many places the uncultivated wastes, rich in nature's unaided loveliness, are besprinkled or bespread with flowers, such as no care can rear in less genial climes. Towards the northern borders of the same plain, though Carmel has cast off its fruit, yet, a few miles south of its eastern extremity—between the desolated plains of Sharon and Esdraelon—the vicinity of Sandianeh, in woody richness and beauty, would be a lovely scene in any land. Before reaching, from the south, that hitherto scarcely visited corner, we entered the altered scenery, as the hilly ground, clothed with wood, borders the naked plain of Sharon. Undulating hills of varied form and elevation, together with their intervening valleys, are decked with fresh and vigorous evergreen oaks, that are either closely crowded, more thinly ranged by nature's hand, or sparsely scattered where seats of nobles might proudly stand, were not wild prowling Bedouins to be seen.—The bare and marshy plain of Houle has still its corners, of which a full riddance has not yet been made,—on one extremity cultivated fields, protected by the guards at Jacob's bridge, and on the other, noble oaks and other trees that shade and surround the ragged path or *desolate highway* for several miles, from the lower sources of the Jordan, at

Tel-el-Kady, the site of Dan, to the higher at Paneas, as these present their respective claims to be the birth-place of that famous stream. At either place, there is no sign to show that the Jordan, though rising amidst ruins, flows now through so desolate a valley as that which bears its name. "The garden of Geddin, situated on the borders of Mount Sharon, and protected by its chief, extends several miles in a spacious valley, abounding with excellent fruits, such as olives, almonds, peaches, apricots, and figs. A number of streams that fall from the mountains, traverse it, and water the cotton plants that thrive well in this fertile soil."¹ "The scenery in the plain of Zabulon is, to the full, as delightful as in the rich vale upon the south of the Crimea;—it reminds the traveller of the finest parts of Kent and Surrey. The soil, although stony, is exceedingly rich, but now entirely neglected. But the delightful vale of Zabulon appears everywhere covered with spontaneous vegetation, flourishing in the wildest exuberance."² Along the mountains of Gilead, "the land, possessing extraordinary riches, abounds with the most beautiful prospects, is clothed with rich forests, varied with verdant slopes; and extensive plains of a fine red soil are now covered with thistles, as the best proof of its fertility."³ The beautiful scenery in Mount Gilead and Adjlun (Ajalon) has also been described by Irby and Mangles, Mr Robinson, and more recently by Lord Lindsay, who justly remarks, that "it can scarcely be surpassed in beauty"—"every minute introduces you to some new scene of loveliness;"—"but a painter alone could give an idea of these scenes of beauty and grandeur."⁴

After crossing the Jordan, and passing through immense fields of thistles, and some patches of cultivated ground, we ascended Mount Gilead by the Wady Hamour. The lower

¹ Mariti's Travels, ii. 151.

² Clarke, ii. p. 400.

³ Buckingham's Travels, p. 325.

⁴ Lord Lindsay's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 102, 107.

part of the valley was besprinkled with trees, which increased in number and size as we advanced. Before reaching a higher elevation olives chiefly abounded. Many of them were large and beautiful, though their cultivation was wholly neglected ; one beside our path was fourteen feet in circumference. Oaks, gradually succeeding to the olive with which they were partially intermingled, soon thickened into a dense wood ; and we passed for five hours through a fine forest of varieties of oaks, of which the evergreen was by far the most frequent. Pines took their place on the higher ascents, and also crowned the wooded circumjacent hills. Along the banks of the stream oleanders in full bloom rose to the height of twenty or thirty feet ; and they clothed so closely a level space on the sides of a small wady on an opposite hill, that their rich flowers appeared like a purple carpet fringed with green. The denseness of the wood at times shut out every view save that of our immediate path ; but in every open space or glade, the ground was wildly beautified by the close flowers of immense fields of thistles of varied hues, as rank as they were luxuriant, many of which we estimated at eight feet high. The pendulous ivy often hung and gently waved from the outer branches of high trees. Laurels were innumerable and large. The wild almond-tree, honeysuckle, and myrtle paid their tribute of fragrance and beauty to the sweetness and loveliness of the woodland scene. After ascending to the top of the valley, in crossing the adjoining heights, still more lovely prospects opened to our view through the hills of Gilead and Adjelun. From a small space cleared of wood, where we pitched our tent for the night, the mountains around were seen in woodland beauty not to be surpassed, some of them wholly invested in the green verdure of the trees, so that a solitary bare spot, however small, was looked for in vain.

Were it not for the *locusts* that had come like a cloud

to do their appointed work, and for endless fields of rankest thistles that betoken *desolation* as well as fertility, where, as of old, all manner of fruits might as luxuriantly grow;—were it not for the fire, as related by Lord Lindsay, a witness of its effects, that in the vicinity has “burnt a whole mountain side,” where “many trees had perished in the conflagration, and some were standing half alive, half dead, while others had quite escaped”—and thus threatened to make a *full riddance* of that *corner* of the land, as has been made, from such and other causes, of far more extensive regions;—were it not that, where olives grow, *the labour of the olive fails*, and that the laurels, whose flourishing in all their freshness would symbolise unfaded renown, were, with few exceptions, *barked* and blasted, so that they may not there be seen in such profusion by any stranger from a far land again;—were it not that this very region is as lonely as it is lovely, all but tenantless and *forsaken*, and so *few men left*, that in a long day’s journey we passed but a single village, and met no travellers in the mountains of Israel, which *no man passeth through, and where the way-faring man ceaseth*:—were it not for *them that dwell therein*, small as their number is, the rude inhabitants of that solitary village,—in a site fitted for princely mansions, and not for miserable hovels—who refused us milk, or any other food for money, and would not suffer us to put up our tent for a night on a desolate spot near their dwellings, and also for a camp of miserable wanderers whom we met in their migrations, with their wives, and children, and scanty flocks, in another woodland of Gilead;—and, still more, were it not that, instead of a flourishing city in a *delightful land*, situated as in ancient days beside the source of the Amour, a copious fountain of the purest water flowing from a rock, we saw nothing but some foundations of ruins, which, if not sought for, might not have been seen, that are still

recognised as *Oom el-Jelaad*, but now as *utterly desolate* as if, like Gilead of old, it had been *threshed* anew *with threshing instruments of iron*;—were it not for such signs and tokens of predicted judgments, these hills are so full of beauty that, instead of a corner of a field in a desolate land which thus far only has remained unscathed, they look as if no curse had ever come near them, and as if they stood in a land still blessed of the Lord. And yet these beauteous hills, bordering both, lie between the desolate valley of the Jordan, and the naked plains of the Hauran, as if forming to each field a *corner* of which, *forsaken* as it is, and long forgotten as it has been, a full riddance has not been made; and Gilead, the land of balm, looks as if it were Gilead still. Where the works of man have perished, natural beauties survive. Enough is left there to show that Israel's was—and may be again—a *goodly heritage*; and desolate as it lies, the *gleanings* might suffice to close *the lips of talkers* till they can tell of as lovely hills in populous regions as those of forsaken Gilead: and when confronted merely with its natural growth, or wild produce, neither sown nor planted by the hand of man, sceptics might blush for their blasphemies against Immanuel's land, and see here not only visible proofs of Scriptural inspiration, but also substantial reasons for believing predictions yet unaccomplished, even as beholding how—were the time but only come—*Israel shall be satisfied in Gilead*.

In the prophetical as in the historical Scriptures, Gilead is repeatedly associated with Bashan. Not in Gilead only might Israel, or any other people—did not the promises which are only theirs forbid that the land should be else than desolate so long as they are in their enemies' land—be satisfied, but in Bashan and in Ephraim too, as the same good word of hope does bear, for a time, when ungodliness shall be turned from Jacob. “And I will bring *Israel*

again to his habitation, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon Mount Ephraim and Gilead. In those days, and at that time, saith Jehovah, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none: and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve."

"Bathanyeh is situated on the northern slope of the Jebel Hauran. The soil in this region is of unrivalled fertility, and the wheat is celebrated as the finest in Syria. The fields were already green with the new crop, which was springing up with a luxuriance seldom seen in other parts of Syria."¹ "The ancient towers of Kunawât (Kenath) occupy a commanding position on the summit of the rocky cliff overhanging the ravine; and from beside them," says Mr Porter, "my eye wandered over one of the most beautiful and interesting panoramas I ever beheld in Syria. . . . Here there are hill and vale, graceful wooded slopes, and wild secluded glens, frowning cliffs with battlemented summits, moss-grown ruins, and groups of tapering columns, springing up from the dense foliage of the evergreen oaks of Bashan. The fresh foliage hides all defects, and enhances the beauty of the noble portico and massive wall; while the luxuriant creepers twine round the pillars, and wreath themselves as garlands among the volutes of the capitals."² "This portion of Bashan is especially beautiful. One after another, the nearer green valleys opened before me," says Mr Graham, "as I crossed the mountain-chain; and here began the forest of oaks which are so often referred to in the sacred writings, but which now exist only in a small portion of Bashan. All the western side of the mountains, from near Kunawât southwards, is covered with those beautiful trees; but nowhere else in all the Hauran are they found. They may indeed well be called 'the beauty of Bashan.'

¹ Porter's *Five Years in Damascus*, vol. ii. p. 52.

² *Ibid.* pp. 98, 99.

The oak is an evergreen. The country all about Nazareth is now famous for its oaks; yet I saw none so fine as those on the Druz mountains. Hebrân, a town situated on high ground, within an hour of the highest peak of the Hauran, I next visited. This peak is called el-Kuleib, and is said to be about 6000 feet above the level of the sea. From the plain near Bozrah it looks very high, and is a most important point for taking bearings. It is a mountain of great beauty, cone-shaped like the summit of Etna, and covered with a forest of oaks to its very top. This is possibly the hill spoken of by David, 'God's high hill, even the hill of Bashan.'"

Other fields have their corners that have not been cut down—as gleanings besides are still spread over the land. Nabulus is near to the ancient capital of Ephraim. The hills of Samaria are less bleak and bare than those of Judea; and throughout the land, where they still are to be found, many villages have yet their fig-trees, olives, and pomegranates, as well as their cultivated fields around them. Two or three may here be noticed in lieu of reiterated descriptions. "The valley of El-Deir, near Souf, is," as described by Burckhardt, "a most romantic spot. The narrow plain was sown with wheat and barley. Large oaks and walnut-trees overshadow the stream."¹ The gardens of the large village of Anepta, in the hill-country of Samaria, fenced, like many others, with the prickly pear, plentifully bears figs, pomegranates, almonds, and vines. A grove of fine olives spreads over the valley, one of which was *fourteen feet* in circumference; and, as we passed, cattle were treading out the corn in a large thrashing-floor, which lay in heaps around it. Situated on the summit of a lofty hill, Safed, of which the inhabitants were buried in the ruins, that, like those of the castle, were levelled with the ground

¹ Burckhardt, p. 265.

by the earthquake in 1834, not only gives evidence how soon the walls of a fallen city of Israel may be raised from its ruins, as if built of stone newly hewn from the quarry; but it also shows, instead of naked plains as now, what fruits the hills of Israel, at their greatest height, can bear. On the elevated region on which it stands there are several projecting or mountain-tops, which give rise to a succession of steep intermediate valleys, on the sides of two or three of which, and anciently round the summit of one, with the castle in the centre, the city was built. Vines wholly cover the terraced sides of the hill below the castle; and as these were seen by us at midsummer from the opposite height, one line of pomegranates rose above another, the bright red flowers of which seemed to rest on the verdant foliage of the vines, intermingled with the deep green of the fig-tree, and the silvery leaves of the olive which flickered in the scented air. Over the cultivated terraces, the stones that present an aspect of sterility in neglected hills, were altogether hid from view; and the steep slope was then one mass of verdure, as the vines were spread over the ground, or hung over the terraces beneath, or rose over them above; and other fruits flourished as luxuriantly, with soil and sun to nourish and ripen them all. By such a *gleaning grape* on a mountain top, not only may the faithfulness of the word be seen, as *it* remains, but it shows what a *vintage is past*, how the paths of the Lord dropped down fatness of old on his chosen people in his chosen land, and the hills were *covered with the shadow of the vine*, and how when He shall turn his feet to these long desolations,—*it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk*,¹ when swords, now so readily drawn, shall be beaten into ploughshares, and spears, that now bristle throughout the land, shall be beaten

¹ Joel iii. 18.

into pruning hooks, and Jew and Gentile cease to trust in bulwarks that earthquakes can throw down.—Amidst younger and lesser, but still large, trees, an olive decaying with age still lingers in the vale of Safed,—as on the uppermost branch of a shaken tree—to show like others what *berries* that tree did bear, as there they hang. Though its place be high on a mountain, the circumference of its trunk (22 feet 3 inches) exceeds that of the seemingly co-eval olive, which is vauntingly shown as the largest at Tivoli, in one of the finest olive groves of Italy at the foot of the Sabine hills, but which is not half the dimensions of some of the other olive-gleanings, after the harvest, in Israel's desolate and neglected land. And yet, derided as it has been, it wants not other witnesses throughout its bounds; for from the heights of Lebanon to the plain of Philistia, and from the desolate shores of Canaan to the now fruitless Bashan, such *gleanings* are seen beside the path of the traveller, as may put to shame the *vintage* of other lands. Of these a note may here be given, by merely stating the *circumference* of some of the largest trees, as we measured them in passing.

About eight miles south from Sidon, near a small stream covered with oleander, there stood by the wayside a sycamore-tree, much decayed with age, and wasted away in the centre—thirty feet in circumference. Another sycamore, still flourishing, upwards of twenty-eight feet, also stands alone, in a desolated plain, nearly midway between Migdol and Ashdod. At the former village, amidst many fine olives, we measured four, *seventeen, nineteen, twenty-two, and twenty-six and a half feet* in circuit. In the valley of Dibbin, in Gilead, are olive-trees from thirteen to seventeen feet; and others of equal size still flourish, amidst rank thorns, in a grove of fine olives, where none are left to gather their fruit, in their own village of El-Gitta. Close by Jerusalem, the

largest olive in the valley of Jehosaphat is eight yards in girth, and one in that of Hinnom is ten. One, at least, in Shechem is nine in girth; around the roots, about half a foot from the ground, it is twelve yards. The above measurements are those of the trunks of the trees, some of which, like that in Tivoli, are much decayed. Near to Beshirrai, in Lebanon, at the height of about three thousand feet, where many terraces are clothed with vines as richly as at Safed, are chesnut trees upwards of twenty-two feet in circuit. At the foot of that "goodly mountain," a tree at the corner of two streets near the bazaars of Damascus, vies in circumference with that of the largest of the cedars of Lebanon, two of which are about thirteen yards in circumference at an elevation so high that if ever reached by mountain tops in our cold clime, where it would border the region of perpetual snow, scarcely a blade could grow.

That land once flowed with milk and honey, and was designated as a *land of honey*, as well as of *oil-olive*. And here, too, there is still something *left*. Bee-hives, laid horizontally, and formed of large jars of pottery, piled up in successive rows, are frequent throughout many of the remaining villages. In the vicinity of Sandianeh, we counted in passing, not the whole number, but a hundred hives at the village of Kannia, and at Caffrin a hundred and thirty. In three arched recesses in the wall of a large square building at Solomon's pools, were two hundred hives. The bees were as active, as the lambs are as sportive as ever, in a land where many men are idle, and joy has withered from among them. Honey did not exceed a fifth part of the English price; at Jaffa, oranges were but a twentieth; and throughout the land other fruits were proportionally cheap.

Other illustrations may here be given from Beyrout and



Hebron, as from Sychar or Nabulus, how cities of Israel were anciently environed—the gleanings of the past and earnest of the future.

“Beyrout has a fine appearance, the rising ground behind being studded with villas, and completely clothed with verdant gardens and mulberry-trees.”¹ The view (see plate) taken in early spring, before the vines had put forth their leaves, shows their naked stocks, with the supporters prepared for bearing heavy clusters of grapes, where in due season nothing can be seen but rich fruit and verdant foliage. Irrigated, like those of Sychar, the environs of Beyrout are as a watered spot in an unwatered garden. A fine large olive grove, which might be the boast of any land, spreads along its plain. Defended by the Lebanon from the incursions of the wandering Arabs, the villas are safe beyond the walls; and each man, more than in other parts of that troubled land, can still sit in safety under his own vine, and under his own fig-tree, though in ages past that town too has often been a *spoil and a prey*, and more recently was battered by British cannon. Far within the bounds of the ancient kingdom of Solomon as it lies, some vestige of that *glory*, which has indeed *waxed thin*, may there be seen. And whether the traveller first enters the Holy Land there or at Jaffa, he touches an ungleaned field which once throughout was a land of vines and oil-olive, of pomegranates, and figs, and whose emblem was the palm.

On the opposite extremity of the land, on the south, beyond which there is neither town nor village, Hebron yields another illustration, while, situated between them far from either, the hill of Samaria, its city gone, may yet give evidence of rural beauty.

Hebron, less rich and picturesque than some other places in the land, is associated with themes of peculiar interest.

¹ Narrative, p. 238.

There Abraham pitched his tent, and *dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is Hebron*. There he built an altar unto the Lord; and there the Lord appeared unto him, and communed with the father of the faithful.¹ There Sarah died, and hence the cave of Machpelah before Mamre became the burying-place of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—whose *God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*.² There Jacob dwelt when he sent Joseph out of the vale of Hebron to his other sons, who fed their flocks in Shechem.³ There David reigned seven years before he sat on the throne of Zion.⁴ Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt;⁵ and has long outlasted that ruined city, in which God *set a fire*. And while the Pharaohs have been dragged from their tombs, and the temples of Egypt have been deserted, and the sanctuaries of Israel are defiled and desolate, that building which encloses the cave in which the first fathers of the Israelitish race were buried, is entire, and guarded with religious care. According to Jewish and Arab tradition and belief—far more worthy of trust than Greek and Roman legends, often discordant alike with Scripture and with reason—the bodies of the patriarchs were laid where the mosque of Hebron, originally built by Solomon, now stands. The massy and peculiar structure of part of the building,—in an inner wall of which the writer in passing measured a single stone twenty-four feet in length,—seems to denote its Hebrew origin, long antecedent to the days of the Saracens. As seen in the centre of the plate, it has escaped destruction, and is undefaced by decay, while thousands of edifices else have fallen, and, so far as its original structure yet remains, not one of equal antiquity now stands on the west of the Jordan. While it recalls ancient days, it speaks also of *the resurrection of the dead*, of the time of the adoption of the

¹ Gen. xiii. 18; xviii. 1, 33.

² 2 Sam. ii. 11.

³ Gen. xxiii. 2, 18–20.

⁴ Num. xiii. 22.

⁵ Gen. xxxvii. 14.



body from the power of the grave, the time when the elect of God from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God, when the cave of Machpelah shall give up its dead. Hebron, a city of refuge in Israel, has hitherto escaped more than other cities, and has here its gleanings to present as witnesses. Among many lesser trees in the adjoining plain, one called "Abraham's oak" spreads its branches over a space two hundred and fifty feet in circumference. Many fine olive-trees skirt the town, and are spread around it, (see plate.) Rich vineyards, intermixed with many fig-trees and pomegranates, clothe the valley, and partially the terraced sides of the circumjacent hills. Thirty-three centuries and a half have passed away since men were sent by Moses, ere the Israelites entered it, to see the land, and to *bear the fruit of it*. They came to *Hebron* and to the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence *a branch with one cluster of grapes*, and they bare it between two upon a staff, and they brought of the pomegranates and of the figs. Nearly eighteen hundred years ago, the last tribe of Israel *was rooted out of Judea*; and even at this distant age, in the desolate land of an expatriated people, Hebron in rich abundance has its vines, and pomegranates, and figs, such as vindicate their fame in the most ancient times; and at the time the writer was first in the land, some Jews of Hebron, who dared not pass the threshold of the mosque over the tomb of Abraham, *cut down a branch with one cluster of grapes*—about a yard in length, though unripe and scarcely fully grown, (June 17, 1839,) and presented it to Sir Moses Montefiore, then on a second visit to the land of his fathers, not without the hope in his heart that the time of Israel's return was nigh. Such gleanings, which, amidst such desolation, might tend to strengthen the wish and confirm the hope, are not to be gathered by the

strangers, who have laid it desolate to the degree prescribed to them by Him who *brake up for the sea his decreed place, and set bars and doors, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come but no farther: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.* But the connection of these with other predictions may be reserved for other pages, as pertaining to another theme.

If aught still more definite be sought to show that the word is the Lord's and that his hand is in the work, as He hath *the times and the seasons in his own power*, the testimony may be taken of a Commissioner of the British government, who was sent forth to Syria for the promotion of commerce and not for the illustration of prophecy, and of a British consul long resident in the land, who was astonished to hear his own testimony thus applied in illustration of a predicted fact, and in settling the last question that has here to be resolved.

Is there yet in it a TENTH? The first paragraph in the first document affixed to the *Report on the Statistics of Syria*, laid before Parliament, runs thus: "*Population.* Syria is a country whose population bears no proportion to its superficies, and the inhabitants may be considered, on the most moderate calculation, as reduced to a TITHE of what the soil could abundantly maintain under a wiser system of administration."¹ In the body of the Report, respecting the productive powers of northern Syria, it is stated, that "*the country is capable of producing TENFOLD the present produce.*"² The degree of the depopulation seems thus to be commensurate with that of the desolation, as thus authoritatively ascertained, for "commercial" purposes and prospects, and both, as Mr Consul Moore personally informed the author, before being aware of another use of the testimony,—were the closest to the truth that they

¹ Page 111.

² Page 90.

could make them. In many previous editions, it was stated, before the British government sent forth a commission to make such inquiries: "It is impossible to ascertain the precise proportion. The words of Pierre Bello, quoted by Malte-Brun,¹ though the same in substance with the testimony of others, here afford the closest commentary. 'A tract from which a hundred individuals draw a scanty subsistence formerly maintained thousands.'" But this is closer and more precise. And, as already quoted, it has also been recorded, without any allusion to the predictions, "Population seems to have decreased from *thousands* to *hundreds*, and from *hundreds* to *decades*; what were cities of considerable magnitude, are now wretched villages; and large towns have not a single tenant to perpetuate the memory of their name."—"The population of the country is reduced to a *tithe* of what the soil could abundantly maintain"—"the country is capable of producing *tenfold* the present produce." "The countless ruins of Palestine," we quote here the words of Mr Stanley, "of whatever date they may be, tell us at a glance that we must not judge the resources of the ancient land by its present depressed and desolate state. They show us not only that 'Syria might support tenfold its present population, and bring forth tenfold its present produce,' but that it actually did so. And this brings us to the question which Eastern travellers so often ask, and are asked on their return, 'Can these stony hills, these deserted valleys, be indeed the Land of Promise, the land flowing with milk and honey!'"² This brings us, he might have said, to the answer to another question, *Lord, how long?* how long was Israel's blindness to continue, as Isaiah asked the *Lord of hosts* (Jehovah Sabaoth, Jehovah Jesus.) Surely it was the Lord in his glory who said—that, ere that glory should arise in Israel, the cities should be wasted without

¹ Geog. vol. ii. p. 151.² Sinai and Palestine, p. 120.

inhabitant, and the houses without man—and the land be utterly desolate—and added, *Yet in it shall be a TENTH, &c.*¹ Surely it was none but *He that formeth the mountains and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought, that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth, The Lord, the Lord God of hosts is his name*, who thus saith;² *The city that went out by a thousand shall leave an hundred, and that which went forth by an hundred shall leave ten, to the house of Israel.*³ Surely that is the word of the Lord in which it is written—though other judgments were still to follow—in *that day*, when only gleaning grapes were to be left in the land, *shall his strong cities be as a forsaken bough, and an uppermost branch which they left* BECAUSE OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL: *and there shall be desolation.* Surely *the God of Israel is the Lord*; and surely, *the Lord of all the earth shall He be called.*

These are not chance words. It was not by chance that after so long a time these things may now at last be seen in Israel's Land, which thus respond to the word of Israel's Lord. And it is not to "chance" that the full completion of Jehovah's response to the prophet's interrogation is committed. After long desolations there is yet in it a tenth; and that is now seen and confessed to be a truth which was given for a sign.

While gleanings are thus strewed over Israel's land, from Lebanon to Philistia and from Bashan to the sea, they show how rich was the field that has been reaped, how great is the desolation that has been wrought; and how, while each *vision* is seen in its *effect*, and each figure in its accordant facts,—the whole land is so depicted and described in its varied features, that he who has eyes to see may see, and he who has ears to hear may hear, that Israel's land is the

¹ Isaiah vi. 13.² Amos iv. 13.³ Amos v. 3.

witness of Israel's God; and that as his judgments are true, so his promises shall not fail.

A glorious land, without its cultivators; a goodly inheritance without its heirs; Jacob's heritage waste, and Jacob's children wanderers among the nations, till joy is withered from the sons of men in their withered land, which, delightful as it was, now mourns unto the Lord because of its desolation, and has become as a garden without water, an oak without leaves, an olive that has been shaken, and a vineyard when the vintage is past, a fruitful field, when the harvest is over, like unto a desolate wilderness:—but still a garden once worthy of the Lord, and called his own, not altogether empty, but run to *waste*, its substance in it as a garden still, unweeded and unwatered, covered with briers, and thorns, and thistles, such as neglected gardens grow, with herbage luxuriant as the richest meadows, traversed by the wild boar of the forest, and the wild beasts of the field, a borderless *pasture* of wandering flocks;—an oak, or a teil-tree, whose wood is the hardiest, whose roots are as deep, and whose trunk and branches are as strong as ever, however leafless it be for a season;—an olive beaten once, but not gone over again, and still bearing some lingering berries on its else *forsaken boughs*;—a vineyard, when the vintage is past, but to which no man has *come back* to fetch again the clusters or grapes that were forgotten;—and a fruitful field when the harvest is over, and the harvest shouting has ceased, but yet the reaped field as of Israel's land,—here, a left sheaf, and there an uncut corner, and everywhere ungathered ears, enough to fill the *gleaner's lap*, as it was by God's own law in times long past, when the poor and the stranger were not forgotten of the Lord—so that, were the gleaners come, it would be as *he that gathereth ears in the valley of Rephaim*, while yet the *tithe* in Israel's land

is left for Jacob's children: Such is now the goodly land which the God of the whole earth *espied* for Abraham, and by these similitudes it is set in view. Such as it was to be it has become, while bereft for *many generations* of the people, whom, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, the Lord did take from Egyptian bondage, and plant, as his own *vine*, within it. Without looking here at other signs which are *set* for determining the time for the destined gleaners to come—the destined *restorers* to restore—while these facts are so positive and plain, and these judgments defined as they reach their measured bounds, who, in the exercise of that reason which God has given him, discarding an incredulity alike unjustifiable and ungodly, may not in these days, when such things are seen, be himself a witness of the truth of the words immediately annexed to these predictions,—*at that day shall a man look to his Maker, and his eyes shall have respect to the Holy One of Israel!*¹ For others there is another time, and another word—*Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see: but THEY SHALL SEE, and be ashamed for their envy at the people.*²

That a land with such *gleanings* left, and such *substance* in it, should be so desolate, may well *astonish* those *who dwell therein*, and also every *stranger from a far land* who visits it. Visited as of late years it has been by many, speculations are now rife, and attempts have been made, for its improvement and renewed cultivation. “Both for agriculture and manufactures,” according to an eye-witness, as reported to the British government, “Syria has great capabilities. Were fiscal exactions checked and regulated, could labour pursue its peaceful vocations, were the aptitudes which the country and its inhabitants present, for the development of industry, called into play, the

¹ Isaiah xvii. 7.

² Isaiah xxvi. 11:

whole face of the land would soon be changed.”¹ The same Report bears, that a “forced cultivation” had been tried. “Last year (1837) Ibrahim Pasha forced an increased cultivation throughout Syria, and the inhabitants of the different towns were obliged to take upon themselves the agricultural charge of every spot of land susceptible of improvement. He himself set the example, and *embarked a large sum in such enterprises*. The officers of the army, down to the majors, were forced also to adventure in similar undertakings. *The result was, however, extremely unfortunate from the want of the usual periodical rains which caused the failing of the crops generally in Syria, and in most cases a total loss of capital ensued.*”² “*I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass: and your strength shall be spent in vain, for your land shall not yield her increase, &c.—I will scatter you among the heathen—and your land shall be desolate.—Then shall the land enjoy her Sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies’ land, even then shall the land rest.—Your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it, &c.*”³ In speaking of this abortive attempt to force the recultivation of the land as an illustration of these predictions, to an intelligent Arabic of the Greek church, who had been previously converted from infidelity after reading thrice the Arab edition of this treatise, he said to the writer, that he *knew it well*, for he himself had lost much money in the ruinous enterprise. *As long as they (the Jews) be in their enemies’ land, their land lieth desolate.*

But the same *sure word* hath declared, that “the great capabilities of Syria for agriculture” shall not for ever be dormant and inert, “for the whole face of the land,”—in the *same words* as those of Dr Bowring, but in another

¹ Parliamentary Report, p. 29.

² Lev. xxvi. 19, 20, 32–34.

³ Ibid. pp. 9, 19.

book than that which was thus laid by sovereign authority before earthly legislators,—shall yet be changed, though by other men and other means, and that, too, “soon” or speedily when the time is come, and when the work according to HIS WORD shall be *hastened*. *Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the land with fruit.*

Although all the power and all the expenditure of one of the greatest of modern despots—a *fierce lord* into whose hands *Egypt* was *given*, whose *rod* over it that smote *whole Palestina* has been *broken*—were exercised and spent in vain; yet wherever any spot has been fixed on as the residence, and seized as the property, either of a Turkish Aga or of an Arab Sheikh, it enjoys his protection, is made to administer to his wants or to his luxury, and the exuberance and beauty of the land of Canaan soon re-appear. But such spots are, in the words of an eye-witness, only “mere sprinklings”¹ in the midst of extensive desolation. And how could it ever have been foreseen, that the same cause, viz. the residence of despotic spoliators, was to operate in so strange a manner, as to spread a wide wasting desolation over the face of the country, and to be, at the same time, the very means of preserving the thin gleanings of its ancient glory? or that a few berries on the outmost bough would be saved by the same hand that was to shake the olive? Spots cultivated even by the Bedouins, show fields of barley in the midst of plains of thorns or thistles.

Without entering in these pages on the field, now narrowing fast, of unfulfilled predictions, as inapplicable to our present theme, though not of itself unimportant or forbidden,—justice would not here be done to the evidence which prophecy presents in its accomplishment, were we altogether to overlook predicted events, associated, as to time, with the predicted degree of the depopulation and desolation of

¹ General Straton's MS. Travels.

Israel's land—which such explicit testimonies thus accredit as realized. The *vision* of the prophet itself here *speaks*, and may well disavow a needless *interpretation*.

The fortress also shall cease from Ephraim, and the kingdom from Damascus, and THE REMNANT OF SYRIA: they shall be as the glory of the children of Israel, saith the Lord of hosts. And in that day it shall come to pass, the glory of Jacob shall be made thin—yet gleanings grapes shall be left in it,¹ &c.

The remnant of Syria,—spared till then,—was to become like the glory of Israel when thinned to its *gleanings*. What that *remnant of Syria* was, may be clearly seen. “The country of Kesrouan, in Lebanon,” says Burckhardt, as he visited and described it in 1810, “*is full of villages and convents*. There is hardly any place in Syria less fit for culture—yet it has become the most populous part of the country. The satisfaction of inhabiting the neighbourhood of places of sanctity, of having church bells, &c. are the chief attractions that have peopled Kesrouan with Catholic Christians.”² In the Parliamentary Report, published in 1843, Dr Bowring states, that “the inhabitants of Lebanon are an active and industrious race, who turn to good account such parts of their soil as are suited to agricultural production.—In many parts of the mountain range the land is laid out in terraces, much resembling the almost horticultural cultivation of Tuscany and Lucca.—Large quantities of mulberry-trees grow at various elevations. There is also an abundance of olive-trees, some vineyard grounds, much wheat and maize, and many gardens filled with vegetables. *There is no part of Syria in which there is so obvious an activity—none in which the inhabitants appear so prosperous or so happy.*”³ Lebanon for many ages maintained its independence, and was ruled by its own chiefs. But, within

¹ Isa. xvii. 3-6.

² Burckhardt, p. 182.

³ Page 8.

a short space, it has since been desolated by civil wars. Its inhabitants have been disarmed, armed, and disarmed again. The weapons put in their hands for expelling Mehemet Ali from Egypt, were used for their mutual destruction. In an official communication from the British ambassador at Constantinople to the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, it is recorded, under date, "May 17, 1845, The last advices from Syria, dated the 4th inst., present a most melancholy picture of the state of affairs in Mount Lebanon. The flames of civil war had burst out afresh; crimes of the deepest dye had been committed with impunity; conflicts between armed bodies of men had taken place with considerable loss of life; *murder, pillage, and conflagration, were raging in several parts of the mountain,*" &c.¹ In his next letter, the civil warfare in Lebanon was described as "increasing both in extent and violence." The Consul-General of Syria thus wrote to Sir Stratford Canning, May 17, 1847, "towards sunset the 16th, I saw the smoke, the sure sign of a collision, rising from the village of Abaidie, and soon afterwards a larger quantity from the lower part of the valley. The next morning a number of houses and small villages were seen burning on the mountain-side close to Beyrout. The Druses burnt the chief village of the Meten and the old castle of the Maronite Emirs there. The sight of eighteen burning villages and hamlets, or houses, created a great sensation in Beyrout."² In the *Times* of June 25, of the same year, it is recorded at the close of a leading article, that "a Tartar brought intelligence from Beyrout of the 24th ult. Tranquillity was not yet restored in the mountains; fresh engagements had taken place between the Maronites and the Druses. The Smyrna journals of the 9th inst. bring news from Beyrout of the 3d inst. The Maronites, though at first victorious, had ultimately

¹ Sir Stratford Canning to the Earl of Aberdeen. Par. Papers. Correspondence relative to Syria, Part i. p. 106.

² Correspondence relative to Syria, Part ii. pp. 164, 165.

succumbed. *The number of the villages burned exceeded a hundred, two-thirds of which belonged to the Christians; and seventeen of their convents had been reduced to ashes.*"

On the western side of the Anti-Lebanon, the appearance of burning villages in the mountain was like that of a grand illumination, as stated in a letter to the author from the Rev. Mr Graham of Damascus. In another dated from that city 10th September 1845, which he received from Mr Consul Wood, a most intelligent and watchful observer of what passed in Syria, he says, "You will have heard through the channel of the newspapers¹ the late scenes in Lebanon, —and you are perhaps struck with the fact, that in spite of the united efforts to cause Lebanon to prosper and flourish, its last flowers are fast withering away." Such testimonies show how soon, in the appointed time, *the remnant of Syria* may be as the glory of Jacob, as it is made thin.

*I will cut off the inhabitant from the plain of Aven, literally, as in the margin, Bikath-aven.*² "Nothing can be more striking," says Burckhardt, as he wrote in 1810, "than a comparison of the fertile but *uncultivated districts of Bekaa* and Baalbec, with the rocky mountains, in the opposite direction, where, notwithstanding that nature seems to afford nothing for the sustenance of the inhabitants,

¹ Of these, some farther extracts may be given:—"Beyrout, May 17, 1845.—A civil war, and one of extermination, reigns at this moment in the mountains, between the Druses and the Christians; and during the last fifteen days the horrors we have seen perpetrated are dreadful. On every side the sounds of battle are heard, and nothing is seen but fire and flames,—*houses, villages, churches, and convents*, being reciprocally a prey to the flames. At the moment I write, we have before us the appalling spectacle of no less than *eleven villages*, and a number of Maronite *churches and convents in flames*."—(From the *Malta Times*.) "The news from this country is dreadful—it sickens the heart. Besides the accounts given in the Levant papers—which of course must palliate the events as much as possible—we have seen letters from Beyrout which give a horrible account of Syria in general, and of Lebanon in particular. For fifteen days previously, wholesale murder, burning, and every possible crime was committed. The greater part of the villages and towns in the high lands are in ashes."—(The *Impartial of Smyrna*.) "Christian, Druse, and mixed villages are all burnt."—*Times*, June 5, 1845.

² Amos i. 5.

numerous villages flourish.”¹ The *Bekaa* is the *plain* between Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, and is doubtless the same as Bikath-Aven—the *plain of idols*, situated as one of the greatest of idolatrous temples there was,—and lying as it does between Damascus and Beth-eden, in Lebanon, with both which names and places it is associated in the prophetic record. Long one of the most populous as fertile regions of Asia, for the possession of which the kings of Syria and of Egypt often contended in wars in which thousands fell, *the inhabitants* have been *cut off* from its uncultivated wastes—now as deserted and desolate as Esdraelon and Sharon, even where villages were thickly clustered on the “rocky mountains” which enclose it. In passing across it, in about three hours, from the ruins of Baalbec to Lebanon, we saw not a village in the *plain*, and did not meet a man. It was a *plain of idols*, as one of the most magnificent temples ever built by man was situated in it, and still bears in its stupendous ruin, the name of the chief of the heathen gods—Baal-bec; and fertile as any region of Syria, it is “an uncultivated district,” from which its once teeming population has been swept, and is now, as bearing one of the noblest of ruins, visited by strangers who cannot inspect its ruins without trampling under foot the broken *idols* in their ruined temple.

Lebanon was celebrated for the extent of its forests, and especially for the size and excellency of its cedars. It abounded also in the pine, the cypress, the vine, &c. Its *forest* was a Scriptural figure of *the glory* of Assyria and of Egypt; and its fall too was a figure of theirs. *The high ones of stature shall be hewn down. Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one.*² To itself the prophecy exclusively applies, *Lebanon is ashamed, and withered away.*—Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars.

¹ Burekhardt's Syria, p. 20.

² Isaiah x. 33, 34.

Howl, fir-tree; for the cedar is fallen, because the mighty are spoiled.¹ In describing Egypt's fall, it is said, *Thou shalt be brought down WITH THE TREES OF EDEN, unto the nether parts of the earth.*² *The forest of the vintage is come down*—but still, as in other things, a *gleaning* remains, even of *the glory of the forest* of Lebanon. Where anciently it stood, the region, for many miles around, is bleak, desolate, and bare, as if not a single tree of renown had ever there adorned the wilderness. But seen at a distance, in descending from the loftiest heights of Lebanon, there is one covered spot—as if by a left sheaf in a shorn field—in which a few cedars worthy of Lebanon are seen, of which the writer may now testify, having rested during a Sabbath under their shade.

Of Lebanon, Volney says, “Towards Lebanon the mountains are lofty, but they are covered in many places with as much earth as fits them for cultivation by industry and labour. There, amidst the crags of the rocks, may be seen the no very magnificent remains of the boasted cedars.”³ In a note, he adds, that “there are but four or five of these trees which deserve any notice.” The dark speck, where the *forest of Lebanon* spread widely on every side, is now indeed so small a *gleaning* of its ancient glory, that, in the words of the prophet, thus tauntingly confirmed by the sceptic, *Lebanon is ashamed*. But the *magnitude* of the few old cedars that yet remain may shame the goodliest trees of “Provence and Normandy,” as much as their *gay carpeting* shows that Israel's land now blushes in its *withered herbs*. Eight cedars⁴—the smallest of which all the forests of France would, if they could, *boast* of as their

¹ Zech. xi. 1, 2.

² Ezek. xxxi. 18.

³ Travels, vol. i. p. 292.

⁴ Two are 33 feet in circumference. The rest which we measured are 33½ feet, 31 feet 10 inches, 29 feet, 28½, 27¾, and 22 feet, round the trunks, the least of these being thus upwards of seven yards, and the largest nearly thirteen yards in girth. Some of these have been stated by others as larger, and are so nearer to the root. They are as lofty as they are large.

“king”—are magnificent remains, that show what a goodly mountain Lebanon was, and how withering is that word which has left them alone, with smaller trees on a knoll or little hill. And fallen as the forest is, as fell the proud Assyrian whom it typified in his pride, what was true of him is true of it; and the scoff of the sceptics at its *four or five trees* that deserve any notice, may show how he could not here write a note of a few words, or state a minute fact, without giving a literal interpretation to an apparently symbolical prediction. *The rest of the trees of his forest shall be few that a child may write them.* Assyria and Egypt have been brought down, *with the trees of Eden.*—But, though the proofs of inspiration be complete, *the end is not yet.* Lebanon may now be *ashamed* beside Gilead. But of both it is written, when civil wars and all others shall be no more, “*I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon, and place shall not be found for them.*”¹ And when all figures of judgments shall have passed away, and *Israel* shall be the *Lord's inheritance*, *the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians.*²

SECTION V.

SAMARIA AND JERUSALEM.

The separate capitals of Israel and of Judah have their assigned burdens resting on them, to which they bear witness, as do Bethel, Hazor, and Chorazin to theirs.

Among such a multiplicity of prophecies, where the prediction and the fulfilment of each is a miracle, it is almost impossible to select any as more wonderful than the rest. But those concerning Samaria are not the least remarkable. That city was, for a long period, the capital

¹ Zech. x. 10.

² Isa. xix. 23-25.



of the ten tribes of Israel. Herod the Great enlarged and adorned it, and, in honour of Augustus Cæsar, gave it the name of Sebaste. There are many ancient medals which were struck there.¹ It was the seat of a bishopric, as the subscription of some of its bishops to the acts of ancient councils attests. Its history is thus brought down to a period unquestionably far remote from the time of the prediction; and the narrative of a traveller, which alludes not to the prophecy, and which has even been unnoticed by commentators, shows its complete fulfilment. Besides other passages which speak of its extinction as a city, the word of the Lord which Micah saw concerning Samaria, is—*“I will make Samaria as an heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard: and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley; and I will discover the foundations thereof.”*² And “this great city is now wholly converted into gardens; and all the tokens that remain to testify that there ever has been such a place, are only on the north side, a large square piazza encompassed with pillars, and on the east some poor remains of a great church.”³ Such was the first notice of that ancient capital given by Maundrell in 1696, and it is confirmed by Mr Buckingham in 1816: “The relative distance, local position, and unaltered name of Sebaste, leave no doubt as to the identity of its site; and,” he adds, “its local features are equally seen in the threat of Micah.”

Such was the brief notice of the ancient capital of Israel, contained in many editions of this treatise. But having visited the interesting spot, the author cannot forbear from glancing at the prophetic history of Samaria, and also

¹ Calmet's Dictionary. Relandi Palæstina, p. 981.

² Micah i. 6.

³ Maundrell's Travels, p. 78. Buckingham's Travels, pp. 511, 512. It has also been described in similar terms by other travellers. The stones are poured down into the valley, the foundations discovered, and there is now only to be seen “the hill where once stood Samaria.” Nabulus has been mistaken by one traveller for the ancient Samaria.

pointing more minutely to its local features as they are indeed clearly seen in the threatenings of the prophets. A daguerreotype view may now set its cityless hill before the eye of the reader.

In the origin of its history, the hill of Samaria was bought of Shemer, by Omri king of Israel, who built on it a city, which, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill, he called Samaria.¹ Few seats of royalty can rival its princely site. In regard at least to its capabilities for strength or beauty, separately, far more conjointly, it could scarcely be surpassed. Its local position is most peculiar. Of a finely varied and oblong form, the isolated hill of Samaria, with a flattened summit, seems as if it had been raised by nature at "the head of the fat valley," to be at once a stronghold and royal seat. And judgment-stricken as it is, none can stand on the uncovered foundations of the vanished city, and look, from among its solitary columns, on the gleanings of its ancient glory all around, without beholding, as it were, in the mind's or the memory's eye, the once glorious beauty of the city and the scene, ere ever the flower that bloomed there in all its gorgeous beauty had faded, or "the crown of pride" that was seated there had been trampled under foot. On one side, beyond the narrow intervening vale, where native loveliness in wild luxuriance lingers still, the terraced hills which bound the head of the valley, rise gently from the plain, as if spread forth to view in all their natural richness, and must once have formed a noble portion of the scene of "glorious beauty," which the hanging gardens of Babylon could have but faintly imitated. And on the other, the valley, varied in its features, but unvaried in natural fertility, spreads forth into a wide expanse, as if unfolding the ancient glory of Israel, while as yet there was no *leanness* there.

¹ 1 Kings xvi. 24.

But Samaria was as noted for its wickedness as for its beauty; and therefore it is marked all over with judgments. Omri, the king of Israel, and founder of Samaria, wrought evil in the eyes of the Lord; and did worse than all that were before him. But Ahab, his son, and other successors in his stead, exceeded him in iniquity. Samaria became the seat of idolatry and wickedness; and the word of the Lord went forth against it.

*The head of Ephraim is Samaria.*¹ Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is as a fading flower, which are on the head of the fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine; Behold the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, which, as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand. The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden under feet: and the glorious beauty which is on the head of the fat valley shall be a fading flower, and as the hasty fruit before the summer; which, when he that looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he eateth it up.² I will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel.³ I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths. None shall deliver her out of mine hand. I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her Sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts. And I will destroy her vines and her fig-trees, whereof she hath said, These are my rewards that my lovers have given me: and I will make them a forest, and the beasts of the field shall eat them.⁴ The pride of Israel doth testify to his face: therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity.⁵ They have deeply corrupted themselves, as in the days of Gibeah: therefore he

¹ Isa. vii. 9.⁴ Hos. ii. 6, 10-12.² Isa. xxviii. 1-4.⁵ Hos. v. 5.³ Hos. i. 4.

will remember their iniquity, he will visit their sins.—As for Ephraim, their glory shall fly away like a bird.¹ The inhabitants of Samaria shall mourn over it—for the glory thereof, because it is departed from it. As for Samaria, her king is cut off as the foam upon the water.² Samaria shall become desolate: for she hath rebelled against her God.³ The word of the Lord that came to Micah concerning Samaria—What is the transgression of Jacob? is it not Samaria?—Therefore I will make Samaria as an heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard. And I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley; and I will discover the foundations thereof. For the statutes of Omri are kept, and all the works of the house of Ahab, and ye walk in their counsels; that I should make thee a desolation.⁴ Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations—that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches—that chant to the sound of the viol—that drink wine in bowls—but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph: therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive.⁵

The ten tribes, whose capital was Samaria, were *the first to go captive*. The king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years; and he took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria.⁶ And *the glory of Ephraim flew away like a bird*. But the predicted doom of the land of Israel, and of the city of Samaria, was not to be taken away till the captivity of Israel should also cease. Rebuilt and destroyed anew, it has ever met its yet irrevocable fate. After the expulsion of the Israelites, its new inhabitants, brought by the king of Assyria from Babylon, Cuthah and Hamath, &c. were

¹ Hos. ix. 9, 11.

² Micah i. 5, 6; vi. 16.

³ Hos. x. 5, 7.

⁴ Amos vi. 1–7.

⁵ Hos. xiii. 16.

⁶ 2 Kings xvii. 5, 6.

called by its name. But it had yet to be cast down and to be laid desolate. And the Samaritans, little more than a century before the Christian era, having, by inflicting injuries on a colony of the Jews, provoked the wrath of Hyrcanus, the ethnarch and high-priest of Judea, he besieged Samaria, and *encompassed it with a ditch and double wall*, eighty furlongs, or ten miles in length. His sons Antigonus and Aristobulus were set over the siege. Suffering the greatest privations, and reduced to extreme distress, the Samaritans invoked the aid of Antiochus Cyzicenes, who reigned at Damascus over Coele-Syria and Phœnicia. Antiochus was defeated, and all his aid was in vain, though he ravaged the land of Israel and Judea. Samaria was again invested. *Her way was hedged up, walled with a wall she could not find her path. And the glorious beauty was as a fading flower, and as the hasty fruit before the summer, which, when he that looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he eateth it.* After a year's siege, it was no sooner in the hand of Hyrcanus, than he destroyed it. Having taken Samaria, he demolished it utterly, till he left not any vestige of a city.¹ Though rebuilt by Gabinius, proconsul of Syria, and afterwards enlarged and adorned by Herod the Great, neither consul nor king could avert its fate. And now, no city there, "the hill on which stood Samaria" is alone to be seen, bearing in its "features" the threatenings of the prophets.

Behold the Lord hath a mighty and strong arm, which, as a destroying storm,—*shall cast down to the earth with the hand.*—*Samaria has been cast down to the earth. The crown of pride has been trodden under foot.* Not a single portion of a wall of any ancient edifice is standing. There are only the remains of a comparatively modern church. Samaria is no more. It extended over the whole

¹ Joseph. Ant. xiii. c. x. 2, 3.

summit, and partly the sides of the hill—as still seen in its columns that yet stand, some of which are near to the village, others, whether standing or broken, in various places, while a colonnade still stands, as there also its monument, on the western extremity the most remote from the village, as faintly seen in the plate. But where it stood in its glory, the ruined city has not been suffered to lie.

I will make Samaria as an heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard. Stones abound in the mountainous regions of Israel; and it is evident, that in their terraced vineyards the stones have been gathered out of the level spaces, which are occupied only by the soil, and when freed from them were fitted for planting. In some fields in the valleys, the stones have been gathered up, and have been cast into heaps, which thus form literally “heaps of the field.” The author, on being asked, while first approaching Samaria, what he understood by heaps of the field, unhesitatingly answered, as thus explained, such heaps as had been passed the preceding day.¹ Samaria, it is recorded, was utterly demolished, immediately after it was taken by Aristobulus, and must then have formed a great mass of ruins. From these it was raised again by Gabinius and by Herod the Great, who enlarged and adorned it, to render it worthy of its new name, which he gave to Augustus, who had given him a kingdom. But again it has been cast down, and more lowly than before. It is even reduced to be as an heap of the field. The stones which yet lie on its surface, bereaved of the glory that might seem to hover around a *ruin*, however defaced, have been gathered singly, and cast into heaps, as if they were heaps of a field, and not the remains of a capital. The ground has been cleared of them to form the gardens or patches of cultivated ground possessed by the inhabitants of the wretched village which

¹ Narrative by Bonar and M'Cheyne, p. 293.



stands on the extremity of the site of the ancient city. The stones, as if in a field or vineyard, have manifestly been gathered up in heaps, to prepare the ground for being sown or *planted*. Quadrangular lines of columns, in an open space on the north side of the hill, towards its base, marking the site of some public building, likely the forum as conjectured by Count Portalis, now stand in a *field* which was covered when we saw it with a crop of ripe barley, that was overtopped in various places with sixteen heaps of stones within the space enclosed by the ancient colonnade; and thus as literally heaps of the field, they have also taken the predicted form of the stricken and departed city, and are useful in illustration of the word of the Lord, though they cannot show with certainty what building was there thronged with those who looked to other laws more than to the decalogue, and were lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. Of all the glory of the royal city of Samaria, nothing greater remains than *an heap of the field*. But only a very small portion of it now rests where its *crown of pride* rose high; for it is farther said,

I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, &c. The road which ascends the hill of Samaria is enclosed on both sides by stones, so rudely piled up, that they may be said to be heaped rather than to be built. Yet all the way they testify that the stones which once formed Samaria have been cast down. They have evidently pertained to ancient buildings, for broken capitals, and pedestals, and other fragments of columns and of hewn stones, may be seen lying confusedly together. And not there only, but all along the sloping sides of the hill, from its summit to its base, lie many stones, of various forms, and fragments of columns, whose form or massiveness has stayed their course, manifestly showing that they have been *cast down*, and could not of themselves have fallen where they lie.

The progress of the stones of Samaria, when *cast down by the hand, or poured down into the valley*, may be traced the whole way, from the site of the city on the top of the hill to the very bottom of the valley, where chiefly they abound, either partially strewed over it, (see plate,) or gathered into heaps among the trees, that *the beasts of the field may the more freely eat*.

I will discover the foundations thereof. In various places along the summit of the hill, monolithic-columns, the ornaments of ancient buildings, and colonnades, now stand alone without princely edifices, or any other, to adorn. The site of the ancient city—except on the small point where the poor village of Sabustieh, with scarcely two hundred inhabitants, still stands—is as destitute of houses as if no capital had ever been there, and no city had ever covered it. The *crown of pride* has been wholly *cast down*. The very ruins, unlike those of other cities, lie not where they fell, to keep the *foundations* from view. These are indeed *discovered* and laid bare. The hewn stones, that once or oftener were erected into the city of Samaria or Sebaste, have been cast down to the ground, and have been thrown into *heaps*, or, in far larger quantities, have been *poured down into the valley*. The proud metropolis, though that of Israel, where false gods were worshipped, has wholly disappeared: and the hill is now seen without its city, of which scarcely a vestige, except some of the columns that adorned it in the days of Herod, remains where it stood. Without the wreck of a ruin, or any stones to cover them, *foundations* alone remain. Some of these are still discernible on the west of the village. But on the author's second visit, immediately after the ingathering of the harvest, they were covered with heaps of unthrashed barley, beside a *thrashing-floor*, like to which Samaria has been. The foundations are now so level with the ground, that they would scarcely disfigure it.

The foundations of walls are traceable, where overgrown with grass *for the beasts of the field to eat*. And in some instances, all uncovered, they are plainly seen, as low as when they first were laid, in the long parallel lines of the then future but now fallen and vanished edifices, in which unholy men of Israel *kept the statutes of Omri*, and broke the commandments of their God; *chanted to the sound of the viol*, while they would not listen to the voice of the prophets; and were *at ease in Zion*, while they would *not mourn for the afflictions of Joseph*; and *trusted in the mountain of Samaria*, while those very judgments were sounding in their ears, which that mountain itself has not heard in vain.

"Old Samaria covered this hill, and stretched down round its skirts. The great Baal temple, and the palaces of his priests, and of Ahab and Jezebel, and the graves of Ash-taroath, then crowned the hill, and adorned its slopes, &c. . . . Now, how changed and still it lies! Where the priests trod the marble pavements of the Temple of the Sun, the night-hawk broods over her eggs among the stones. The yellow nettle grows, almost like a shrub, where garlands for the sacrifice were gathered, and the white convolvulus and dog-rose run riot over the *foundation-stones* of the ancient palaces."¹ While Miss Martineau writes thus, Lord Lindsay says, "I have seldom been so forcibly struck with the fulfilment of prophecy, as when walking over the hill of Samaria."² "I thought," says M. Van de Velde, "of the prophecies spoken against Samaria. Their fulfilment I had this day had before my eyes. Samaria, a huge heap of stones! her foundations discovered, her stones thrown down into the valley! Her streets ploughed up, and covered with corn-fields and olive-gardens!"³

¹ Eastern Life, vol. iii. pp. 203, 204.

² Syria and Palestine, vol. i. p. 333.

³ Travels, p. 255.

In those days of Baalim, wherein Israel burned incense to them, and decked herself with jewels, and went after her lovers, and forgot the Lord, the citizens of her adopted and illegitimate capital, the *kine of Bashan*, that *dwelt in the mountain of Samaria*, oppressed the poor, and crushed the needy, and said unto their masters, Bring, and let us drink. The drunkards of Ephraim erred through wine, and through strong drink were out of the way; they erred in vision, and stumbled in judgment, and wrought woe to Israel. "I will cause all her mirth to cease, her feast-days, her new-moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts. I will destroy her vines and her fig-trees;—and I will make them a forest, and *the beasts of the field shall eat them.*"¹ And now, while Samaria is *desolate*, and the days of her iniquity have been visited upon her, the beasts of the field browse among the trees in the bottom of the valley and hills; and on the grassy mounds,—rising one above another, that girt the lower part of the hill of Samaria, and abound also on those that adjoin it, retaining the form of terraced vineyards,—*the beasts of the field* now pasture where the vines circled, as in ringlets, the head of the fat valley on which Samaria was a crown of pride; and so utterly are her *vineyards destroyed*, that it was only after much searching that a leaf of a *wild* vine could be found.

But Samaria has to assume an altered and a smiling aspect, when she shall see her native children return to her again. "Behold, I will allure her," saith the Lord, "and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her, and I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt. I will betroth thee unto me for ever—in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-

¹ Hosea ii. 11, 12.

kindness, and in mercies,—and in faithfulness.¹ *Thou shalt yet plant vines upon the mountains of Samaria, O virgin of Israel: the planters shall plant, and shall eat them as common things.* For there shall be a day that the watchmen upon the mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the Lord our God.² The house of Jacob shall possess the fields of Samaria.³ And, while the *crown of pride* has been *trodden under the feet* of men and of beasts, in that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a *crown of glory*, and for a *diadem of beauty*, unto the residue of his people,⁴ the remnant of Israel.

But the predicted fate of JERUSALEM has been more conspicuously displayed, and more fully illustrated, than that of the capital of the ten tribes of Israel. It formed the theme of prophecy from the death-bed of Jacob,—and as the seat of the government of the children of Judah, the sceptre departed not from it till the Messiah appeared, on the expiration of seventeen hundred years after the death of the Patriarch, and till the period of its desolation, prophesied of by Daniel, had arrived. A destiny diametrically opposite to the former, then awaited it, even for a longer duration; and ere its greatness was gone, even at the very time when it was crowded with Jews, from all quarters, resorting to the feast, and when it was inhabited by a numerous population dwelling in security and peace, its doom was denounced,—that it was to be *trodden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled.* The times of the Gentiles are not yet fulfilled, and Jerusalem is still trodden down of the Gentiles. The Jews have often attempted to recover it; no distance of space or of time can separate it from their affections; they perform their devotions with their faces towards it, as if it were the object of

¹ Hosea ii. 14, 15, 19.² Jer. xxxi. 5, 6.³ Obad. 19.⁴ Isa. xxviii. 5.

their worship as well as of their love; and although their desire to return be so strong, fixed, and indelible, that every Jew, in every generation, counts himself an exile; yet they have never been able to rebuild their temple, nor to recover Jerusalem from the hands of the Gentiles. But greater power than that of a proscribed and exiled race has been added to their own, in attempting to frustrate the counsel that professed to be of God. Julian, the emperor of the Romans, not only permitted, but invited the Jews to rebuild Jerusalem and their temple; and promised to re-establish them in their paternal city. By that single act, more than by all his writings, he might have destroyed the credibility of the gospel, and restored his beloved but deserted paganism. The zeal of the Jews was equal to his own; and the work was begun by laying again the foundations of the temple. In the space of three days, Titus had formerly encompassed that city with a wall when it was crowded with his enemies; and, instead of being obstructed, that great work, when it was confirmatory of an express prediction of Jesus, was completed with an astonishing celerity;—and what could hinder the emperor of Rome from building a temple at Jerusalem, when every Jew was zealous for the work? Nothing appeared against it but a single sentence uttered, some centuries before, by one who had been crucified. If that word had been of man, would all the power of the monarch of the world have been thwarted in opposing it? And why did not Julian, with all his inveterate enmity and laborious opposition to Christianity, execute a work so easy and desirable? A heathen historian relates, that fearful balls of fire, bursting from the earth, sometimes burned the workmen, rendered the place inaccessible, and caused them to desist from the undertaking.¹ The same narrative is attested by others.

¹ “Imperii sui memoriam magnitudine operum gestiens propagare, ambitiosum quondam apud Hierosolimam templum, quod, post multa et interneciva certamina, obsidente Vespasiano, posteaque Tito, ægre est expugnatum, instaurare sumptibus

Chrysostom, who was a living witness, appealed to the existing state of the foundations, and to the universal testimony which was given of the fact. The historical evidence was too strong even for the scepticism of Gibbon altogether to gainsay; and brought him to the acknowledgment that such authority must astonish an incredulous mind. Even independently of the miraculous interposition, the fulfilment is the same. The attempt was made avowedly, and it was abandoned. It was never accomplished; and the prophecy stands fulfilled. But, even if the attempt of Julian had never been made, the truth of the prophecy itself is unassailable. The Jews have never been reinstated in Judea. Jerusalem has ever been trodden down of the Gentiles. The edict of Adrian was renewed by the successors of Julian; and no Jews could approach unto Jerusalem but by bribery or by stealth. For many ages it was a spot unlawful for them to touch. In the Crusades, all the power of Europe was employed to rescue Jerusalem from the heathen, but equally in vain. It has been *trodden down* for nearly eighteen centuries by its successive masters; by Romans, Grecians, Persians, Saracens, Mamelukes, Turks, Christians; and again by the worst of rulers, the Arabs and the Turks. And could anything be more improbable to have happened, or more impossible to have been foreseen by man, than that any people should be banished from their own capital and country, and remain expelled and expatriated for nearly eighteen hundred years? Did the same fate ever befall any

cogitabat immodicis; negotiumque maturandum Alypio dederat Antiochensi, qui olim Britannias curaverat pro præfectis. Cum itaque rei eidem instaret Alypius, juvaretque provinciæ rector, metuendi globi flammæ, prope fundamenta, crebris assultibus erumpentes, fecere locum exustis aliquoties operantibus inaccessum; hocque modo, elemento destinatus repellente, cessavit inceptum." (Ammian. Marcell. lib. xxii. cap. i. sect. 2, 3. Grot. de Ver. &c. Rufini Hist. Eccles. lib. i. c. xxxvii. Socrat. lib. ii. c. xvii. Theodoret. lib. iii. c. xvii. Sozomen. lib. v. c. xxi. Cassidor. Hist. Tripart. lib. vi. c. xliii. Nicephor. Callis. lib. x. c. xxxii. Greg. Nazianz. in Julian. Orat. ii. Chrysostom. de L. Bab. Mart. et contra Judæos, iii. p. 491. Lind.—Vide Am. Mar. tom. iii. p. 2.)

nation, though no prophecy existed respecting it? Is there any doctrine in Scripture so hard to be believed as was this single fact at the period of its prediction? And even with the example of the Jews before us, is it likely, or is it credible, or who can foretel, that the present inhabitants of any country upon earth shall be banished into all nations,—retain their distinctive character,—meet with an unparalleled fate,—continue a people,—without a government and without a country,—and remain for an indefinite period, exceeding seventeen hundred years, till the fulfilment of a prescribed event to be accomplished after so many generations? Must not the knowledge of such truths be derived from that prescience alone which scans alike the will and the ways of mortals, the actions of future nations, and the history of the latest generations?

Jerusalem was the city which the Lord did choose to place his name there. He loved the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. But while the land has been defiled, and the people have been scattered abroad, these gates have long fallen, and Zion has often been *filled with judgment*. The tomb of David stands without the wall of the present city; but the *palaces of Jerusalem* have disappeared from Mount Zion. Not a vestige of its *bulwarks* that long withstood Roman hosts remains; and the *city of David* that stood on Zion, has wholly vanished, as if that site of Israelitish royalty, like Samaria the other, had never been reclaimed from the plough. Only a small portion of the mount is now enclosed within the walls of the modern Jerusalem; and Mount Zion may now be seen, as each successive traveller can testify, as the prophet saw it in vision, *ploughed as a field*, (see frontispiece.) In other places throughout the land, grain is sown around closer and larger olives than those of Zion as it is among them, while many open spaces or fields are there given up entirely to the

plough. "At the time I visited this sacred ground," says Dr Richardson, "one part of it supported a crop of barley, another was undergoing *the labour of the plough*, and the soil turned up consisted of stone and lime mixed with earth, such as is usually met with in the foundations of ruined cities. It is nearly a mile in circumference. We have here another remarkable instance of the special fulfilment of prophecy; *therefore shall Zion for your sake be ploughed as a field.*"¹ Zion testifies against her children. On his first visit to Zion, the writer of these pages, together with his friends, gathered some ears of barley from a field that had been ploughed and reaped: but, on the last, we saw the plough, as in any other *field*, actually cleaving the soil of Zion.

*And the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest.*² Jerusalem lay in *heaps*, after it was besieged, taken, and destroyed by the Chaldeans, and also by the Romans. To this day the mosque of Omar may be seen, as in the plate, as the *crescent* of Mohammed towers over it, where the nobler temple of Solomon stood in its glory. The *mountain of the house*, with its trees around it, may still be said to be "as the *high places* of a forest," devoted as it is, as were they, to the cause of false religion, and not to the worship of the Holy One of Israel. But the words of truth immediately subjoined to these denunciations of the prophet, tell of other times than these in which many a crescent, as now, glitters over it, in token that Jerusalem is still *trodden down of the Gentiles*. *But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come and say, Come and let us go up*

¹ Richardson's Travels, p. 349. Mic. iii. 12.

² Jer. xxvi. 18.

*to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob, &c.*¹

Though a ploughshare did pass over the consecrated ground, as a sign of perpetual interdiction, Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and they that return of her with righteousness.² The Lord is jealous for Zion: and will return unto it. There is a coming *year of recompences for the controversy of Zion.*³ “Thou, O Lord, shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the *set time*, is come. *For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof.* So the heathen shall fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth thy glory. When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory. He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. *This shall be written for the generation to come; and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord,*” Ps. cii. 13, &c. The place of the sanctuary of the Lord shall yet be beautified. Jerusalem, not Rome, shall be “the eternal city.” For thus it is written, “The sons of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee: and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee the city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee; I will make thee *an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations.*—I, the Lord, will hasten it in his time.” Isa. lx. 14, &c.

But the prophecies are not confined to the land of Judea; they are equally unlimited in their range over space as over time. After a lapse of many ages, the countries around Judea are now beginning to be known. And each succeeding traveller, in the communication of new discoveries

¹ Mic. iv. 1, 2. Isa. ii. 2, 3.

² Isa. i. 27.

³ Isa. xxxiv. 8.



concerning them, is gradually unfolding the very description which the prophets gave of their poverty and desolation, at the time of their great prosperity and luxuriance. The countries of the Ammonites, of the Moabites, of the Edomites, or inhabitants of Idumea, and of the Philistines, all bordered with Judea, and each is the theme of prophecy. The relative positions of them all are distinctly defined in Scripture, and have been clearly ascertained. And the territories of the ancient enemies of the Jews, long overrun by the enemies of Christianity, present many a proof of the inspiration of the Jewish Scriptures, and of the truth of the Christian religion.

CHAPTER VI.

AMMON.

THE country anciently peopled by the Ammonites, is situated to the east of the Jordan. It is naturally one of the most fertile provinces of Syria, and it was for many ages one of the most populous. The Ammonites often invaded the land of Israel: and at one period, united with the Moabites, they retained possession of a great part of it, and grievously oppressed the Israelites for the space of eighteen years. Jephthah repulsed them, and took twenty of their cities; but they continued afterwards to harass the borders of Israel, and their capital was besieged by the forces of David, and their country rendered tributary. They regained and long maintained their independence, till Jotham, the king of Judah, subdued them, and exacted from them an annual tribute of a hundred talents, and thirty thousand quarters of wheat and barley; yet they soon contested again with their ancient enemies, and exulted in the miseries that befell them, when Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem, and carried its inhabitants into captivity. In after-times, though successively oppressed by the Chaldeans, (when some of the earliest prophecies respecting it were fulfilled,) and by the Egyptians and Syrians, Ammon was a highly productive and populous country, when the Romans became masters of all the provinces of Syria; and its capital was included among the ten allied cities, which gave name to the celebrated Decapolis. When first invaded by the

Saracens, (A.D. 632,) "this country (including Moab) was enriched by the various benefits of trade;" and Ammon, to which the Greeks and Romans gave the name of Philadelphia, was included among the populous cities which, as recorded by Gibbon, "were secure at least from a surprise by the solid structure of their walls."¹ The fact of its natural fertility is corroborated by every traveller who has visited it. And "it is evident," says Burekhardt, "that the whole country must have been extremely well cultivated, in order to have afforded subsistence to the inhabitants of so many towns,"² as are now visible only in their ruins. While the fruitfulness of the land of Ammon, and the high degree of prosperity and power in which it subsisted, long prior and long subsequent to the date of the predictions, are indisputably established by historical evidence, and by existing proofs, the researches of recent travellers (who were actuated by the mere desire of exploring these regions and

¹ Gibbon's Hist. vol. ix. c. 51, p. 333.

² Burekhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 357.

Having frequent occasion, in the subsequent pages, to refer to the authority of the celebrated and lamented traveller, J. Lewis Burekhardt, the following ample testimonies to his talents, perseverance, and veracity will show with what perfect confidence his statements may be relied on, especially as the subject of the fulfilment of prophecy, being never once alluded to in all his writings, seems to have been wholly foreign to his view, as well as to theirs who, without partiality, have thus appreciated his labours. "He was a traveller of no ordinary description, a gentleman by birth, and a scholar by education; he added to the ordinary acquirements of a traveller, accomplishments which fitted him for any society. His description of the countries through which he passed, his narrative of incidents, his transactions with the natives, are all placed before us with equal clearness and simplicity. In every page they will find that ardour of research, that patience of investigation, that passionate pursuit after truth, for which he was eminently distinguished."³—(*Quarterly Review*, vol. xxii. p. 437.) "He appears, from his books and letters, to have been a modest, laborious, learned, and sensible man, exempt from prejudice, *unattached to systems*; detailing what he saw plainly and correctly, and of very prudent and discreet conduct."⁴—(*Edinburgh Review*, Number lxvii. p. 109.) The following extract from General Straton's manuscript Travels was written at Cairo, and is the more valuable, as containing the result of personal knowledge and observation:—"Burekhardt speaks Arabic perfectly, has adopted the costume, and goes to the religious places of worship; has been at Mecca; in short, follows in everything the Turkish manners and customs, and he is not to be distinguished from a Mussulman. With what advantage must he travel! He is by birth a Swiss, but having been educated in England, speaks our language perfectly."

obtaining geographical information) have made known its present aspect ; and testimony the most clear, unexceptionable, and conclusive, has been borne to the state of dire desolation to which it is, and has long been reduced.

That the prophecies concerning the desolation of Ammon reach to the *latter days*, is manifest in the denunciation, that Ammon shall be a perpetual desolation. "Rabbah of the Ammonites shall be a desolate heap—then shall Israel be heir unto them that were his heirs, saith the Lord.—I will bring again the captivity of the children of Ammon, saith the Lord."¹ Thus in express connection with terrible things in righteousness and the blessedness and glory that shall follow, Ammon has a place. In one of the last verses of the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, in the vision of the new earth as well as of the new heavens, it is written, "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star."² Of Him Isaiah testifies, "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.—He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth.—The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.—He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.—They shall lay their hands upon Edom and Moab, and the children of Ammon shall obey them."³

It was prophesied concerning AMMON, "Son of man, set thy face against the Ammonites, and prophesy against them. I will make Rabbah a stable for camels, and the Ammonites a couching-place for flocks. Behold, I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and will deliver thee

¹ Jer. xlix. 2, 6.

² Rev. xxii. 16.

³ Isa. xi. 1, 4, 9-14.

for a spoil to the heathen ; and I will cut thee off from the people, and I will cause thee to perish out of the countries: I will destroy thee. The Ammonites shall not be remembered among the nations. Rabbah (the chief city) of the Ammonites shall be a desolate heap. Ammon shall be a perpetual desolation."¹

Ammon was to be delivered for a spoil to the heathen, to be destroyed, and to be a perpetual desolation. "All this country, formerly so populous and flourishing, is now changed into a vast desert."² Ruins are seen in every direction. The country, long subjected to the Saracens, is now wholly possessed and pastured by the Bedouins. The extortions of the Turks, and the depredations of the Arabs, kept it in *perpetual desolation* and made it *a spoil to the heathen*. "The far greater part of the country is uninhabited, being abandoned to the wandering Arabs, and the towns and villages are in a state of total ruin,"³ "At every step are to be found the vestiges of ancient cities, the remains of many temples, public edifices, and Greek churches."⁴ The cities are desolate. "Many of the ruins present no objects of any interest. They consist of a few walls of dwelling-houses, heaps of stones, the foundations of some public edifices, and a few cisterns filled up ; there is nothing entire, but it appears that the mode of building was very solid, all the remains being formed of large stones.—In the vicinity of Ammon there is a fertile plain interspersed with low hills, which for the greater part are covered with ruins."⁵

While the country is thus despoiled and desolate, there are valleys and tracts throughout it, which "are covered with a fine coat of verdant pasture, and are places of resort

¹ Ezek. xxv. 2, 5, 7, 10 ; xxi. 32. Jer. xlix. 2. Zeph. ii. 9.

² Seetzen's Travels, p. 34.

³ Ibid. p. 37.

⁴ Burckhardt's Travels in Nubia, introd. pp. 37, 38, 44.

⁵ Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, pp. 355, 357, 364.

to the Bedouins, where they pasture their camels and their sheep.”¹ “The whole way we traversed,” says Seetzen, “we saw villages in ruins, and met numbers of Arabs with their camels,” &c. Mr Buckingham describes a building among the ruins of Ammon, “the masonry of which was evidently constructed of materials gathered from the ruins of other and older buildings on the spot. On entering it at the south end,” he adds, “we came to an open square court, with arched recesses on each side, the sides nearly facing the cardinal points. The recesses in the northern and southern wall were originally open passages, and had arched door-ways facing each other; but the first of these was found wholly closed up, and the last was partially filled up, leaving only a narrow passage, just sufficient for the entrance of one man, and of the goats, which the Arab keepers drive in here occasionally for shelter during the night.” He relates that he lay down among flocks of sheep and goats, close beside the ruins of Ammon; and particularly remarks that, during the night, he was almost entirely prevented from sleeping by the bleating of flocks.² So literally true is it, although Seetzen, and Burckhardt, and Buckingham, who relate the facts, make no reference or allusion whatever to any of the prophecies, and travelled for a different object than the elucidation of the Scriptures, that *the chief city of the Ammonites is a stable for camels, and a couching-place for flocks.*

The Ammonites shall not be remembered among the nations. While the Jews, who were long their hereditary enemies, continue as distinct a people as ever, though dispersed among all nations, no trace of the Ammonites remains, none are now designated by their name, nor do any claim descent from them. They did exist, however,

¹ Buckingham's Travels in Palestine, &c. p. 329.

² Buckingham's Travels among the Arab Tribes, under the title of Ruins of Ammon, pp. 72, 73, &c.

long after the time when the eventual annihilation of their race was foretold, for they retained their name, and continued a great multitude until the second century of the Christian era.¹ *Yet they are cut off from the people. Ammon has perished out of the countries; it is destroyed.* No people is attached to its soil; none regard it as their country and adopt its name; and *the Ammonites are not remembered among the nations.*

Rabbah (Rabbah-Ammon, the chief city of Ammon,) *shall be a desolate heap.* Situated as it was, on each side of the borders of a plentiful stream,—encircled by a fruitful region,—strong by nature and fortified by art, nothing could have justified the suspicion, or warranted the conjecture, in the mind of an uninspired mortal, that the royal city of Ammon, whatever disasters might possibly befall it in the fate of war or change of masters, would ever undergo so total a transmutation as to become a *desolate heap*. But although, in addition to such tokens of its continuance as a city, more than a thousand years had given uninterrupted experience of its stability, ere the prophets of Israel denounced its fate; yet a period of equal length has now marked it out, as it exists to this day, a desolate heap, a perpetual or permanent desolation. Its ancient name is still preserved by the Arabs; and its site is now “covered with the ruins of private buildings, nothing of them remaining except the foundations and some of the door-posts.—The buildings, exposed to the atmosphere, are all in decay,”² so that they may be said literally to form a *desolate heap*. The public edifices, which once strengthened or adorned the city, after a long resistance to decay, are now also desolate; and the remains of the most entire among them, subjected as they are to the abuse and spoliation of the wild Arabs, can be adapted to

¹ Justin Martyr, p. 392, edit. Thirl.

² Burekhardt's Travels in Syria, pp. 359, 360.

no better object than *a stable for camels*. Yet these broken walls and ruined palaces, which attest the ancient splendour of Ammon, can now, by means of a single act of reflection, or simple process of reason, be made subservient to a far nobler purpose than the most magnificent edifices on earth can be, when they are contemplated as monuments on which the historic and prophetic truth of Scripture is blended in one bright inscription. A minute detail of them may not therefore be uninteresting.

Seetzen, whose indefatigable ardour led him, in defiance of danger, the first to explore the countries which lie east of the Jordan, and east and south of the Dead Sea, or the territories of Ammon, Moab, and Edom, justly characterizes Ammon as "once the residence of many kings,—an ancient town which flourished long before the Greeks and Romans, and even before the Hebrews,"¹ and he chiefly enumerates those remains of ancient greatness and splendour which are most distinguishable amidst its ruins. "Although this town has been destroyed and deserted for many ages, I still found there some remarkable ruins, which attest its ancient splendour. Such as, 1st, A square building, very highly ornamented, which has been perhaps a mausoleum. 2d, The ruins of a large palace. 3d, A magnificent amphitheatre of immense size, and well preserved, with a peristyle of Corinthian pillars without pedestals. 4th, A temple with a great number of columns. 5th, The ruins of a large church, perhaps the see of a bishop in the time of the Greek emperors. 6th, The remains of a temple with columns set in a circular form, and which are of an extraordinary size. 7th, The remains of the ancient wall, with many other edifices."² Burckhardt, who afterwards visited the spot, de-

¹ A brief Account of the Countries adjoining the Lake of Tiberias, the Jordan, and the Dead Sea, by M. Seetzen, Conseiller d'Ambassade de S. M. l'Empereur de Russie, pp. 35, 36.

² Seetzen's Travels, pp. 35, 36.

scribes it with great minuteness. He gives a plan of the ruins; and particularly noted the ruins of many temples, of a spacious church, a curved wall, a high arched bridge, the banks and bed of the river still partially paved; a large theatre, which has forty rows of seats, vaults on both its wings, and a colonnade in front, which must have had at least fifty columns; the castle, a very extensive building, the walls of which are thick, and denote a remote antiquity; many cisterns and vaults; and a plain covered with the decayed ruins of private buildings;¹—monuments of ancient splendour amidst a *desolate heap*.

More recent travellers, with this treatise in their hands, or with the full knowledge of these prophecies, have visited Ammon; and the testimony to the predicted facts, first unconsciously given, has been repeated and corroborated by those who have personally testified, as they consciously witnessed, the fulfilment of the prophecies.

Great was our own regret at the frustration of the fond hope, after all seemed secure for realizing it, of daguerreo-typing what the prophets told of Ammon, and what Lord Claud Hamilton, Lord Lindsay, and other witnesses saw, as they at once read these prophecies and witnessed their accomplishment. By the former the writer was earnestly urged, while at Jerusalem in 1839, to accompany him and Mr Littleton on their tour east of the Jordan; and such was then the facility of visiting the land when it *had* a ruler, that he offered, in great kindness and strong temptation, to go to Moab as well as Ammon, wherever he wished. A sense of duty, limited to a single object, forbade what was then as easy as desirable. But, on his second visit, when all government over these regions, but that of the Bedouins, had ceased, it was impossible, in the summer of 1844, to reach it, though only a day's journey from Gerash, or, after

¹ Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 353, &c.

repeated attempts, in any other direction. For at that very time two hostile tribes were fiercely contending for the possession of the ruins of Ammon, which was itself the scene of bloody conflict, as if these *wild* sons of Ishmael, who believed not in Scripture, had been emulously striving to the death which of them should be instrumental in the accomplishment of the words of a prophet of Israel, in having the ancient capital of the Ammonites, long Israel's enemies, as a stable for *their* camels, and a couching-place for their flocks. On recrossing the Jordan, a troop of *spear-men* passed us in all haste to that scene of combat, and were joined by some of our Bedouins, who themselves had formerly been driven from the immediate vicinity of Ammon, and whose possession it had been, though they could no longer conduct a traveller to its ruins. In that land of perpetual contests, where war no less than robbery is a trade, such seeming rivalry for the actual accomplishing of a predicted word, may not cease among these believers in a *false prophet*, till the words which have gone forth against Ammon and other lands, as given to such possessors, reach their period of completion in the accomplishment of other predictions in which such wild warriors and long established desolaters have another part and another destiny, ere *blessings* at last rest on Ishmael's seed. "Rebuke the company of *spear-men*—scatter thou *the people that delight in war*. Princes shall come out of Egypt; and Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hand unto God. Sing unto the Lord ye kingdoms of the earth;—lo He doth send forth his voice, and that a mighty voice. Ascribe ye strength unto God: his excellency is over Israel, and his strength is in the clouds."¹ His strength is in the clouds; but his judgments are yet upon the earth. And without a daguerreotype view,—the evidence itself is photographic, and the proof is

¹ Psalm lxxviii. 30-34.

manifest, how Ammon to this day bears witness, as only at length it has thus been *heard* to testify, that *power belongs unto the Lord*. That hostile metropolis tells that its own words of judgment have fallen on it in truth as strict as that of those which, as the Scriptural record bears, went forth against David, and fell on him when he was driven from his throne, because of a deed that was done at Ammon; and deeds of darkness met their righteous retributive judgments in what was done in *the light of the sun*.

"The wonderful fulfilment of the prophecies," Lord Claud Hamilton observes, "is an interesting subject of observation in this country. The Ammonites shall not be remembered among the nations. Rabbah of the Ammonites shall be a desolate heap. Ammon shall be a perpetual desolation. I will make Rabbah of the Ammonites a stable for camels, and a couching-place for flocks." He stated to the writer, on again meeting him at Carmel, as he had recorded in his journal, from which these words are transcribed, that while he was "traversing the ruins of the city, *the number of goats and sheep which were driven in among them, was exceedingly annoying, however remarkable as fulfilling the prophecies.*" They interrupted or prevented some of his measurements.

"We passed *many ruined sites*," says Lord Lindsay, "and the whole country has once been very populous, but during the whole day's ride, thirty-five miles at least (from Jerash to Ammon,) we did not see a single village; the whole country is one vast pasturage, overspread with the flocks and herds of the Bedouins. The dreariness of its (Ammon's) present aspect, is quite indescribable,—it looks like the abode of death,—the valley stinks with dead camels, one of which was rolling in the stream; and though we saw none among the ruins, they were absolutely *covered* in every

direction with their dung. That morning's ride would have convinced a sceptic; How runs the prophecy? 'I will make Rabbah a stable for camels,' &c.¹ "We found the principal ruins much more extensive and interesting than we expected,—not certainly in such good preservation as those of Jerash, but *designed on a much larger scale*.—Bones and skulls of camels were mouldering in the area of the theatre, and in the vaulted galleries of this immense structure.—Ammon is now quite deserted, except by the Bedouins, who water their flocks at its little river, &c.—We met *sheep and goats by thousands, and camels by hundreds*, coming down to drink, all in beautiful condition."²

"To the southward of the Zerka," says Mr Robinson, "commences the country anciently inhabited by the people called Ammonites, a country in those days as remarkable for its rich productions, as for the number and strength of the cities that covered its surface. The space intervening between the river and the western hills is entirely covered with the remains of private buildings,—now only used for stables for camels and sheep; there is not a single inhabitant remaining, thus realizing the prophecy concerning this devoted city," &c.³

The "royal city" of the Ammonites withstood a hard-pressed siege, in the days of David king of Israel, who himself fought against it, and finally took it. And under the name of Philadelphia, after an interval of upwards of sixteen hundred years, it was a strong and populous city when the Saracens invaded the Eastern empire.

Its Acropolis, long its chief stronghold, is still conspicuous among its ruins. It stands, as described by Lord Claud Hamilton, "on an isolated hill to the north of the town. Its walls are high, very well built, and in many parts in

¹ Lord Lindsay's Travels, vol. ii. p. 75.

² Ibid. p. 117.

³ Travels, vol. ii. p. 175.

good preservation; but within, the ruins, rubbish, and herbage, have grown nearly to their level. The chief of these ruins are those of a temple, which was once adorned with a portico and peristyle of grand Corinthian columns, all now prostrate; but their massive remains, immense capitals, and large pediments, attest their former magnificence. Of one of the most perfect of these, the shaft alone, without pediment or capital, is thirty-three feet in length, and four feet and a half in diameter." But the Acropolis, no less than the city, presents its illustrations of the word of the Lord. "There is a small stone building quite entire, now used as a *shelter for flocks*, of which there are many. And without the walls, as otherwise within them, nothing remains but scattered materials of former habitations, now partially concealed by the flowers and grass.

"Leaving the Acropolis, we descended, and crossing the stream, on the northern bank of which, among other remains, are those of an Ionic colonnade, we proceeded to the farthest ruins. The most remote of these is a small theatre, evidently intended for scenic representations, as the space behind the proscenium was enclosed, and formed part of the building. Three passages remained as perfect as when they were formed, and they opened upon the stage by three arches. There were likewise side entrances, and communicating passages well adapted for theatrical purposes. The proscenium was very handsomely ornamented; above the three arches ran a rich frieze of Corinthian decorations most beautifully carved, and perfectly uninjured; above were three niches for statues; the seats were on both sides perfect, but the centre forming the stage has been thrown down. There were three entrances by handsome arches, which brought the spectators to a broad landing-place, half-way up the rows of seats, and two smaller arches, which probably served for entrances to the seats of

honour, which here, as at Pompeii, were close to the stage. The theatre is remarkably well built, and is composed of very handsome stone; from without there are three entrances to the scenes, and four niches for statues, two between the doors, and two flanking them.

“The great theatre, near the other, is a grand edifice: it is scooped out of the side of the hill, being partly composed of the living rock, but chiefly of masonry. This theatre must have been intended for games and other exercises in the open air, as, instead of the enclosed passages and covered chambers behind the stage, there is only an open colonnade of handsome Corinthian columns, which extends from one extreme to the other of the rows of seats. Within the colonnade is an extensive arena of a horse-shoe form, 128 feet from seat to seat. Forty-three rows of seats extend to a great height, and are separated into three tiers by broad landing-places; seven radii of smaller steps admitted the spectators to their several seats, and each tier has several recesses. The second tier has doors communicating to a high arched passage, which runs round the theatre, and opens upon a side staircase, by which means the crowd could be divided; back staircases also mount from these passages to the upper tier, so as to enable the more humble spectators to gain and leave their seats without incommoding their richer neighbours below. In the centre of the uppermost bench is excavated a square chamber, with a beautifully carved cornice, having an elegant niche of the shell pattern on each side. There is, as usual in all ancient theatres, an arch entering upon the arena on each side where the seats terminate, reaching the proscenium.

“Of the other principal ruins a more slight notice may be given. A grand building, once apparently of an octagonal form, has still four of its sides perfect, which con-

tain a grand alcove, and three lesser recesses. A colonnade of large Corinthian pillars was once ranged within it, but what purpose it served, there are no means of ascertaining. Heaps of ruins lie around it in bewildering confusion. Near to it are large houses, divided into many apartments, and a more modern church in good preservation; but all are alike deserted, though little labour would restore some of these buildings, not to their pristine glory, but to useful dwellings. And passing from these, other ruins are numerous but uninteresting. But the remains yet standing of one grand temple are sufficient to exhibit its former magnificence, surrounded as it was by lofty columns, some of which are still entire. A noble alcove, richly wrought, containing niches, and supported by pilasters, is yet perfect, a beautiful specimen of the riches of ornament, and fine finish of the corners. And near to the ruinous town is a little fane, square without but circular within, both sides being most richly decorated with frieze corners and pilasters of the Corinthian order. Four niches within are equally elaborately carved. It is divided into square apartments, each containing a variety of rich and elegant ornaments; and an open arch, which forms the entrance, has the most beautifully carved ceiling which I ever saw.”¹

Such is now the once royal city of Ammon. Numerous ruins, and heaps in bewildering confusion, show how it has become a *desolate heap*. But this is not now its only feature. Some buildings in good preservation, and others still perfect, whatever purposes they may have been constructed to serve, fulfil now the purpose which, long before their erection, the prophet assigned them. Arches, of old trodden by the lovers of pleasure, of high or of low degree, unbroken by time which has laid the gay flutterers in the dust, are now promiscuously crowded by beasts; and where

¹ Lord Claud Hamilton's Journal.

nobles were before kept from contact with their fellows, the pilgrim traveller in a desolate land now has cause to complain of the annoyance of *flocks*. It was not for them that arches, sculptured with exquisite art, and almost unrivalled beauty, were erected; nor to shelter them that walls, which, uninjured, have endured for ages, were built; nor did *stables for camels, and couching-places for flocks*, enter into the design of the architects of the palaces, theatres, or temples of Ammon, nor of the sculptors of their beautifully carved cornices and ceilings, and grand columns and alcoves. But He who saw the end from the beginning, declared it, ere ever one of these edifices of Grecian architecture was constructed, or the foundation of any of them was laid, or the plan of any of them was thought of, the appointed doom, and destiny, and use to which they have been brought, were delineated by the prophets; and as Ammon was taken by David, so also, in a higher sense, it is now held captive by the word of the Lord, and awaits the time when the children of Israel shall be restored, and the Lord, *in the latter days, shall bring again the captivity of Ammon*.

“East of Assalt,” including Ammon, are thirty ruined or deserted places, of which the names are given in Dr Smith’s Arabic Lists, only two being marked as having any inhabitants (in 1834); one of which, el-Fuhais, we were informed, was also since deserted.

CHAPTER VII.

MOAB.

THE prophecies concerning Moab are more numerous and not less remarkable than those concerning Ammon. Those of them which met their completion in ancient times, and which related to particular events in the history of the Moabites, and to the result of their conflict with the Jews, or with the neighbouring states, however necessary they may have been at the time for strengthening the faith or supporting the courage of the children of Israel, need not now be adduced in evidence of inspiration; for there are abundant predictions which refer so clearly to decisive and unquestionable facts, that there is scarcely a single feature peculiar to the land of Moab, as it now exists, which was not marked by the prophets in their delineation of the low estate to which, from the height of its wickedness and haughtiness, it was finally to be brought down.

That the prophecies concerning the land and the cities of Moab, as well as of Israel and Ammon, reach, ere their completion, to the latter days, is not merely implied but expressed in the sure word of prophecy itself. The long record of judgments against Moab (Jerem. xlviii. 1-47) thus concludes, "Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab in the latter days, saith Jehovah," &c. When he, who is the root of David and the bright and morning star, shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth, as they have

never yet been gathered, "they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab, and the children of Ammon shall obey them."¹ In the burden of Moab, recorded by Isaiah, it is also written, "Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab; be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler: for the extortioner is at an end, the spoiler ceaseth, the oppressors are consumed out of the land. And in mercy shall the throne be established; and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness. We have heard of the pride of Moab, &c."² It is written again of a time which a dark, and sinful, and troubled world has never yet seen, "He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations.—In this mountain shall the hand of the Lord rest, and Moab shall be trodden down under him, even as straw is trodden down for the dunghill."³ "As I live, saith the Lord of hosts, Moab shall be . . . a perpetual desolation: the residue of my people shall spoil them, and the remnant of my people shall possess them. This shall they have for their pride.—He will famish all the gods of the earth; and men shall worship him, every one from his place, even all the isles of the heathen."⁴

"The burden of Moab. Because in the night Ar of Moab is laid waste, and brought to silence.—Kir of Moab is laid waste.—Moab shall howl over Nebo, and over Medeba.—And Heshbon shall cry, and Elealeh.—The waters of Nimrim shall be desolate: for the hay is withered away, the grass faileth, there is no green thing.—For it shall be, that, as a wandering bird cast out of the nest, so the daughters of Moab shall be at the fords of Arnon.—We have heard of the pride of Moab; he is very proud: even of his haughtiness, and his pride, and his wrath; but his

¹ Isa. xi. 14.

² Isa. xvi. 4-6.

³ Isa. xxv. 7-10.

⁴ Zephau. ii. 9-11.

lies shall not be so. Therefore shall Moab howl for Moab, every one shall howl: for the foundations of Kir-hareseth shall ye mourn; surely they are stricken. For the fields of Heshbon languish, and the vine of Sibmah: the lords of the heathen have broken down the principal plants thereof; they are come even unto Jazer, they wandered through the wilderness: her branches are stretched out, they are gone over the sea. Therefore I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer the vine of Sibmah: I will water thee with my tears, O Heshbon, and Elealeh: for the shouting for thy summer fruits, and for thy harvest, is fallen. And gladness is taken away, and joy out of the plentiful field; and in the vineyards there shall be no singing, neither shall there be shouting: the treaders shall tread out no wine in their presses; I have made their vintage-shouting to cease.”¹ “Against Moab, thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Woe unto Nebo! for it is spoiled; Kiriathaim is confounded and taken; Misgab is confounded and dismayed. There shall be no more praise of Moab.—And the spoiler shall come upon every city, and no city shall escape: the valley also shall perish, and the plain shall be destroyed, as the Lord hath spoken. Give wings unto Moab, that it may flee and get away; for the cities thereof shall be desolate, without any to dwell therein.—Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity.—Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will send unto him wanderers that shall cause him to wander.—How is the strong staff broken, and the beautiful rod! Thou daughter that dost inhabit Dibon, come down from thy glory, and sit in thirst; for the spoiler of Moab shall come upon thee, and he shall destroy thy strongholds.—Moab is confounded; for it is broken down.

¹ Isa. xv. 1, 2, 4, 6; xvi. 2, 6-10.

—Moab is spoiled. And judgment is come upon the plain country; upon Holon, and upon Jahazah, and upon Mephaath, and upon Dibon, and upon Nebo, and upon Beth-diblathaim; and upon Kiriathaim, and upon Bethgamul, and upon Bethmeon, and upon Kerioth, and upon Bozrah, and upon all the cities of the land of Moab, far or near. The horn of Moab is cut off, and his arm is broken, saith the Lord.—O ye that dwell in Moab, leave the cities and dwell in the rock, and be like the dove that maketh her nest in the sides of the hole's mouth. We have heard the pride of Moab, (he is exceeding proud,) his loftiness, and his arrogancy, and his pride, and the haughtiness of his heart.—O vine of Sibmah, I will weep for thee with the weeping of Jazer:—the spoiler is fallen upon thy summer fruits and upon thy vintage. And joy and gladness is taken from the plentiful field, and from the land of Moab; and I have caused wine to fail from the wine-presses: none shall tread with shouting; their shouting shall be no shouting. From the cry of Heshbon even unto Elealeh, and even unto Jahaz, have they uttered their voice, from Zoar even unto Horonaim;—the waters also of Nimrim shall be desolate.—I have broken Moab. They shall howl, How is it broken down!—And Moab shall be destroyed from being a people, because he hath magnified himself against the Lord.”¹ “The cities of Aroer are forsaken; they shall be for flocks, which shall lie down, and none shall make them afraid.”² Moab shall be a perpetual desolation.³

The land of Moab lay to the east and south-east of Judea, and bordered on the east, north-east, and partly on the south of the Dead Sea. Its early history is nearly analogous to that of Ammon. There are manifest and abundant vestiges of its ancient greatness. “The whole of

¹ Jer. xlviii. 1, 2, 8, 9, 11, 12, 17, 18, 20-25, 28, 29, 32, 33, 34, 38, 39, 42.

² Isa. xvii. 2.

³ Zeph. ii. 8-10.

the plains are covered with the sites of towns, on every eminence or spot convenient for the construction of one. And as the land is capable of rich cultivation, there can be no doubt that the country, now so deserted, once presented a continued picture of plenty and fertility.”¹ The form of fields is still visible: and there are the remains of Roman highways, which in some places are completely paved, and on which there are milestones of the times of Trajan, Marcus Aurelius, and Severus, with the number of the miles legible upon them. Wherever any spot is cultivated the corn is luxuriant; and the riches of the soil cannot perhaps be more clearly illustrated than by the fact, that one grain of Heshbon wheat exceeds in dimensions two of the ordinary sort, and more than double the number of grains grow on the stalk. The frequency, and almost, in many instances, the close vicinity of the sites of the ancient towns, “prove that the population of the country was formerly proportioned to its natural fertility.”² Such evidence may surely suffice to prove, that the country was well cultivated and peopled at a period so long posterior to the date of the predictions, that no cause less than supernatural could have existed at the time when they were delivered, which could have authorized the assertion, with the least probability or apparent possibility of its truth, that Moab would ever have been reduced to that state of great and permanent desolation in which it has continued for so many ages, and which vindicates and ratifies to this hour the truth of the Scriptural prophecies.

The cities of Moab were to be desolate without any to dwell therein; and the cities of Moab are desolate without inhabitant. Their place, together with the adjoining part of Idumea, is characterised, in the map of Volney’s Travels, by *the ruins of towns*. His information respecting these

¹ Captains Irby and Mangles’s Travels, p. 378.

² Ib. pp. 377, 378, 456, 460.

ruins was derived from some of the wandering Arabs; and its accuracy has been fully corroborated by the testimony of different European travellers of high respectability and undoubted veracity, who have since visited this devastated region. The whole country abounds with ruins. And Burckhardt, who encountered many difficulties in so desolate and dangerous a land, thus records the brief history of a few of them: "The ruins of Eleale, Heshbon, Meon, Medaba, Dibon, Aroer, still subsist to illustrate the history of the Beni Israel."¹ And it might, with equal truth, have been added, that they still subsist to confirm the inspiration of the Jewish Scriptures, or to prove that the seers of Israel were the prophets of God, for the desolation of each of these very cities was the theme of a prediction. Everything worthy of observation respecting them has been detailed, not only in Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, but also by Seetzen, and, more recently, by Captains Irby and Mangles, who, along with Mr Banks and Mr Legh, visited this deserted district. The predicted judgment has fallen with such truth upon *these* cities, and upon all the cities of the land of Moab, and they are so utterly *broken down*, that even the prying curiosity of such indefatigable travellers could discover, among a multiplicity of ruins, only a few remains so entire as to be worthy of particular notice. The subjoined description is drawn from their united testimony.—Among the ruins of El Aal (Eleale) are a number of large cisterns, fragments of buildings, and foundations of houses. At Heshban (Heshbon) are the ruins of a large ancient town, together with the remains of a temple, and some edifices. A few broken shafts of columns are still standing; and there are a number of deep wells cut in the rock.² The ruins of *Medaba* are about two miles in circumference. There are many remains

¹ Burckhardt's Travels in Nubia, Introduction, p. 38.

² Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 365.

of the walls of private houses constructed with blocks of silex, but not a single edifice is standing. The chief object of interest is an immense tank or cistern of hewn stones, "which, as there is no stream at Madeba," Burckhardt remarks, "might still be of use to the Bedouins, were the surrounding ground cleared of the rubbish to allow the water to flow into it; *but such an undertaking is far beyond the views of the wandering Arab.*" There is also the foundation of a temple built with large stones, and apparently of great antiquity, with two columns near it.¹ The ruins of *Diban* (Dibon), situated in the midst of a fine plain, are of considerable extent, but present nothing of interest.² The neighbouring hot wells, and the similarity of the name, identify the ruins of Myoun with *Meon*, or Beth-meon of Scripture.³ Of this ancient city, as well as of Araayr (Aroar), nothing is now remarkable but what is common to them with all the cities of Moab—their entire desolation. The extent of the ruins of *Rabba* (Rabbath-Moab), formerly the residence of the kings of Moab, sufficiently proves its ancient importance, though no other object can be particularized among the ruins, except the remains of a palace or temple, some of the walls of which are still standing; a gate belonging to another building; and an isolated altar. There are many remains of private buildings, but none entire. There being no springs on the spot, the town had two birkets, the largest of which is cut entirely out of the rocky ground, together with many cisterns.⁴

In a single day's journey, in passing through the land of Moab, Burckhardt mentions or describes the following ruined places that lay either in his route or its vicinity: El Ryhha,

¹ Burckhardt's Travels, p. 366. Seetzen's Travels, p. 37. Captains Irby and Mangles's Travels, p. 471.

² Captains Irby and Mangles's Travels, p. 462. Seetzen's Travels, p. 38.

³ Burckhardt's Travels, p. 365. Irby and Mangles's Travels, p. 464.

⁴ Seetzen's Travels, p. 39. Burckhardt's Travels, p. 377.

Shakour, Meghanny, Mekabbelz, Kherbet Tabouk, Om Aamoud, Szyr, Fokhara, Meraszas, Merdj Ekke, Naour, El Aal (*Eleale*), Hesban, Myoun, the ancient *Baal Meon*, Djeloul, El Samek, El Mesouh, Om el Aamed, El Kefeyrat, Madeba, the ancient *Medaba*, El Teym, perhaps the *Kerjathaim* of the Scripture.¹

Mount *Nebo* was "completely barren" where Burckhardt passed over it, and the site of the ancient city had not then been ascertained.² But of that city, as of the mountain, it may now be said, *Nebo is spoiled*. It has its name with others in Dr Smith's Arabic Lists. In that of places "south of Assalt," are the names of forty-seven "ruined or deserted places," among which are numbered Heshbon, el-Al, Neba, Madeba, Main, Arair, and Dibon.³

While the ruins of all these cities still retain their ancient names, and are the most conspicuous amidst the wide scene of general desolation, and while each of them was in like manner particularized in the visions of the prophet, they thus formed but a small number of the cities of Moab; and the rest are also, in similar verification of the prophecies, *desolate, without any to dwell therein*. Not one of the ancient cities of Moab now exists, as tenanted by man. Kerek, which neither bears any resemblance in name to any of the cities of Moab which are mentioned as existing in the time of the Israelites, nor possesses any monuments which denote a very remote antiquity, is the only nominal town in the whole country; and, in the words of Seetzen, who visited it, "in its present ruined state, it can only be called a hamlet; and the houses have only one floor."⁴ But the most populous and fertile province in Europe (especially any situated in the interior of a country like Moab) is not covered so thickly with towns as Moab is plentiful in ruins,

¹ Burckhardt, p. 363-367.

² Ibid. p. 370.

³ Second Appendix, pp. 169, 170.

⁴ Burckhardt's Travels, p. 338. Seetzen's Travels, p. 39.

deserted and desolate though now it be. Burekhardt enumerates about *fifty* ruined sites within its boundaries, many of them extensive. In general they are a *broken down* and undistinguishable mass of ruin ; and some of them have not been closely inspected. But, in some instances, there are the remains of temples, sepulchral monuments, the ruins of edifices constructed of very large stones, in one of which buildings, "some of the stones are twenty feet in length, and so broad that one constitutes the thickness of the wall;" traces of hanging gardens ; entire columns lying on the ground, three feet in diameter, and fragments of smaller columns ; and many cisterns cut out of the rock. When the towns of Moab existed in their prime, and were at ease,—when arrogance, and haughtiness, and pride prevailed amongst them, the desolation and total desertion and abandonment of them all must have utterly surpassed all human conception. And that such numerous cities, which subsisted for many ages—which were diversified in their sites, some of them being built on eminences, and naturally strong, others on plains, and surrounded by the richest soil,—some situated in valleys by the side of a plentiful stream, and others where art supplied the deficiencies of nature, and where immense cisterns were excavated out of the rock,—and which exhibit in their ruins many monuments of ancient prosperity, and many remains easily convertible into present use,—should have all met the same indiscriminate fate, and be all *desolate without any to dwell therein*, notwithstanding all these ancient assurances of their permanent durability, and these existing facilities and inducements for being the habitations of men,—is a matter of just wonder in the present day,—and had any other people but wandering Arabs been the possessors of Moab, the fact would either have been totally impossible, or unaccountable. Trying as this test of the truth of prophecy is, *that* is the word of

God, and not of erring man, which can so well and so triumphantly abide it. *They shall cry of Moab, how is it broken down!*

But besides the cities of the land of Moab, strictly so called, others, mentioned by name as then pertaining to it, are included in the prophecy of Jeremiah against Moab. Moab, ere the days of that prophet, had magnified himself against the people of the Lord of hosts, and *against their border*. Judgments denounced against the cities of Israel were not repealed, but rather repeated, when any of these were numbered among the cities of Moab. When Israel had become a derision unto Moab, and he was exceeding proud, in the same judgment-roll written by the prophet of the Holy One of Israel, the names of *Beth-gamul*, *Kerioth*, *Bozrah*, &c., cities of Bashan, are catalogued together with Dibon, Aroer, Heshbon, Eleale, &c. "And judgment is come upon the plain country. Upon Dibon, and upon Nebo, and upon Beth-diblathaim, and upon Kiriathaim, and upon *Beth-gamul*, and upon Beth-meon, and upon Kiriathaim, and upon *Kerioth*, and upon *Bozrah*, and upon all the cities of the land of Moab, far and near."

After the ten tribes had been led captive into Assyria, cities of Gilead and Bashan had become, ere the days of Jeremiah, cities of Moab. At an earlier period, Gilead and Bashan are joined together with Carmel and Sharon, in the prophecies of Isaiah, as alike pertaining to the inheritance of Israel. Before Israel's blindness should cease, the cities were to be desolate without inhabitant, and the houses without man. In a vision of what the vineyard of the Lord, the house of Israel, would become, Isaiah thus testifies: "In mine ears said the Lord of hosts, Of a truth many houses shall be desolate, even great and fair (goodly), without inhabitant." There were cities that were to be *forsaken*, as well as cities that were to be destroyed. While

Ammon is a desolate heap, and the cities of Moab Proper are in utter ruin, a different testimony is given concerning cities of Bashan, though they equally bear witness to the truth that they, too, are *without any to dwell therein*.

Mr Cyril Graham, who was the first to visit it, thus describes Beth-gamul. In approaching it, he says, "I had before me an enormous city, standing alone in the desert. It had been seen from the castle of Bozrah, but had never before been visited. It is called by the Arabs *Um el Jemâl*, which suggests the *Beth-gamul* of Scripture, the Hebrew name meaning the 'House of Camels,' and the Arabic word, by a transmutation which is very common, the 'Mother of Camels.' The ruins in this desert abound with the prefix *Um*, 'mother,' while in the mountains of the Haurân we find frequently *Abu*, 'father.' There are other reasons, besides the mere coincidence in name, for placing the ancient Beth-gamul in this part. It will be found, in referring to Jeremiah, that Beth-gamul, Bozrah, and Kerioth are mentioned together. Bozrah and Kerioth are well known. They lie within two hours of each other; and by far the largest city near them is *Um el Jemâl*.

"This is perhaps among the most perfect of the old cities which I saw. It is surrounded by a high wall, forming a rectangle, which seems to enclose more space than the modern Jerusalem. The streets are many of them paved; and I saw here, what I do not think I saw anywhere else, open spaces within the city, such as we should call squares. There are some very large public buildings; but though I diligently sought for inscriptions, I only found three. One of them is in old Greek letters, on a large tower, which I fancy was a prison, and perhaps, in later ages, a convent, as there are many red crosses upon it. Some of the houses were very large, consisting usually of three rooms on the ground-floor, and two on the first storey; the stairs being

formed of large stones built into the house-walls, and leading up outside. The doors were as usual of stone, sometimes folding-doors, and some of them highly ornamented.

“ On reaching this city (as, indeed, was my practice everywhere), I left my Arabs at one particular spot, in charge of the dromedaries, and posted a few as sentinels on the towers to watch the approach of any foe ; and then, taking my rifle with me, I wandered about quite alone in the old streets of the town, entered one by one the old houses, went up stairs, visited the rooms, and, in short, made a careful examination of the whole place ; but so perfect was every street, every house, every room, that I almost fancied I was in a dream, wandering alone in this city of the dead, seeing all perfect, yet not hearing a sound.

“ I don't wish,” Mr Graham adds, “ to moralize too much ; but one cannot help reflecting on a people once so great and so powerful, who, living in these houses of stone within their walled cities, must have thought themselves invincible ; who had their palaces and their sculptures, and who, no doubt, claimed to be *the* great nation, as all Eastern nations have done ; and that this people should have so passed away, that for so many centuries the country they inhabited has been reckoned as a desert, until some traveller from a distant land, curious to explore these regions, finds those old towns standing alone, and telling of a race long gone by, whose history is unknown, and whose very name is matter of dispute. Yet this very state of things is predicted by Jeremiah. Concerning this very country he says these words, ‘ For the cities thereof shall be desolate, without any to dwell therein ’ (Jer. xlviii. 9) ; and the people (Moab) ‘ shall be destroyed from being a people, because he hath magnified himself against the Lord ’ (xlviii. 42). . . . Here I think there can be no ambiguity. Visit these ancient cities,

and turn to that ancient Book—no further comment is necessary.

“In Um el Jemâl, there is a fine arch, like the triumphal arches in Roman cities, and under it lies a mutilated inscription in Latin. No doubt this city, from its size and the richness of the soil about it, must have been a most important place under the Roman rule, as in times before that. There are enormous reservoirs here, but, like those in all the other towns about there, quite dry. The tombs are outside the walls of the city, so that here, as at Palmyra, they practised *extramural* burial.”

“South of Bozrah is some of the richest land in this part of the East. The first town I came to, on the edge of a wâdi, called Wâdi-el-Bolm, is known only by the general name of *ed-Deir*. On very many of the houses were simple crosses cut in the dark stone. In all these towns I found square towers. The next place of importance was *Um-es Semak*, a much larger town. Next came Um es-Shab, then Deir el-Kaffêr, close to which runs the old Roman road from Bozrah to Ammon. In an hour more, *Um el Jemâl*. . . . After leaving *Um el Jemâl el Kîber* (as this town is called), I came to Um el-Jemâl er Zeghîr, and then visited the towns *Subhak*, *Subbeigeh*, *Um es-Senêneh*, *Um el Kotein*, *Kuresin*, and others, and then returned to *Bozrah*. I give no account of all these places,” adds Mr Graham, “as they are very similar one to another, and I have already enlarged so much on *Um el Jemâl*.”

The vast plain southward of Busrah, as seen and described by Mr Porter, was “dotted thickly with deserted cities and villages. That broad black belt in front, with the massive towers and battlements rising up in the midst of it, intermixed with tapering column and minaret, is Busrah. Jemurrin, Keires (Kir-heres?), Burd, Ghusam, and a host of others, are seen on each side; while on the summit of yon

graceful hill on the eastern horizon is the ancient castle of Sulkhad, and there, in the intervening valley, are the widespread remains of Kureiyah.”¹

“I gazed long *inward* upon the ruins of this great and ancient city (Busrah), and *outward* on the rich but deserted plain. My companions had taken shelter from a shower behind the wall, and now there was not a human being—there was not a living thing—there was not a *sign* of life within the range of vision. The whole country around was waste, desolate, and forsaken. . . . Busrah, situated in a plain of unrivalled fertility, with springs of water, its strong fortress, and its battlemented walls—why should Busrah lie desolate and forsaken? This surely was no city to grow up in a day, and fade in a night! This surely was not a city that depended on the uncertain channel of commerce to waft towards it prosperity! Are not the abundance of its waters, and the richness of its soil, and the wide extent of its plain, sufficient guarantees against decay and ruin? But a greater than human agency has been here at work. The curse of an angry God for the sin of a rebellious people has fearfully descended upon this land. Thus spake the prophet more than two thousand years ago: ‘The spoiler shall come upon every city, and no city shall escape; the valley also shall perish, and the plain shall be destroyed, as the Lord hath spoken. Give wings unto Moab, that it may flee and get away; *for the cities thereof shall be desolate, without any to dwell therein.* . . . Moab is confounded, for it is broken down; howl and cry; tell ye it in Arnon, that Moab is spoiled, *and judgment is come upon the plain country.* . . . upon Kiriathaim, and upon *Beth-gamul*, and upon Beth-meon, and upon *Kerioth*, and upon BOZRAH, and upon all the cities of the land of Moab far and near.’ The words of the prophet are now fulfilled to the letter.”²

¹ Vol. ii. p. 140.

² Porter, vol. ii. pp. 155-157.

The spoiler shall come upon every city, and no city shall escape; *the valley also shall perish, and the plain shall be destroyed, as Jehovah hath spoken; and judgment is come upon the plain country, &c.* Moab has often been a field of contest between the Arabs and the Turks; and although the former have retained possession of it, both have mutually reduced it to desolation. The different tribes of Arabs who traverse it, not only bear a permanent and habitual hostility to Christians and to Turks, but one tribe is often at variance and at war with another; and the regular cultivation of the soil, or the improvement of those natural advantages of which the country is so full, is a matter either never thought of, or that cannot be realized. Property is there the creature of power and not of law; and possession forms no security where plunder is the preferable right. Hence the extensive plains, where they are not partially covered with wood, present a barren aspect, which is only relieved at intervals by a few clusters of wild fig-trees, that show how the richest gifts of nature degenerate when unaided by the industry of man. And instead of the profusion which the plains must have exhibited in every quarter, nothing but "patches of the best soil in the territory are now cultivated by the Arabs;" and these only "whenever they have the prospect of being able to secure the harvest against the incursions of enemies."¹ The Arab herds now roam at freedom over the valleys and the plains; and "the many vestiges of ancient field-enclosures"² form not any obstruction; they wander undisturbed around the tents of their masters, over the face of the country; and while *the valley is perished, and the plain destroyed, the cities also of Aroer are forsaken; they are for flocks which lie down, and none make them afraid.* "Every year, in fact, is narrowing the borders of the settled inhabitants;

¹ Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 369.

² Ibid. p. 365.

and unless a new system of government is ere long adopted, the whole country east of the Jordan must be abandoned by those who cultivate the soil. Nowhere on the earth is there such a melancholy example of the fatal effects of tyranny, rapacity, and misrule, as that here exhibited. Fields, vineyards, pastures, villages, cities, all alike deserted; and the few inhabitants that remain behind the barrier of rocks and mountains drag out a miserable existence, oppressed by the robbers of the desert on the one hand, and the still more formidable robbers of the government on the other. The Druses form the only exception to this; their courage, their union, and their position, concentrated in the strongholds of the *mountains*, enable them to brave, when occasion demands it, both Turks and Bedawin."¹

The shouting for thy summer fruits and for thy harvest is fallen. The spoiler is fallen upon thy summer fruits and upon thy vintage. The Arabs of the Belka cultivate patches of the best soil in the territory "whenever they have a prospect of being able to secure the harvest against the incursions of enemies."² "In May, the whole of the Haouran is covered with swarms of wanderers from the desert, who remain there till after September: these are at present almost exclusively the tribe of the *Æneze*. Formerly, the Haouran was often visited by the Sherarat, by the Shammor, and by the Dhofir."³—"The words of the Lord by the prophet Jeremiah are now literally fulfilled: The spoiler is fallen upon thy summer fruits and upon thy vintage, &c. It is worthy of remark, as a striking fulfilment of this prophecy, that the figs and grapes that still grow in the orchards and vineyards around Sulkhad are every year rifled by the bands of Bedawin. It was these acts of robbery, more than dread of personal violence, that caused Sulkhad and other places near it to be deserted by

¹ Porter's *Damascus*, vol. ii. p. 187.

² Burckhardt, p. 369.

³ *Ibid.* p. 308.

their inhabitants. Not unfrequently the grain crops of the people of Busrah are completely eaten up by the passing flocks of the Arabs. How wonderfully minute were the predictions of the prophet: 'The spoiler is fallen upon thy summer fruits and upon thy vintage!' ¹

The strong contrast between the ancient and the actual state of Moab is exemplified in the condition of the inhabitants as well as of the land; and the coincidence between the prediction and the fact is as striking in the one case as in the other.

The days come, saith the Lord, that I will send unto him (Moab) wanderers that shall cause him to wander, and shall empty his vessels. The Bedouin (*wandering*) Arabs are now the chief and almost the only inhabitants of a country once studded with cities. Traversing the country, and fixing their tents for a short time in one place, and then decamping to another, depasturing every part successively, and despoiling the whole land of its natural produce, they *are wanderers who have come up against it, and who keep it in a state of perpetual desolation.* They lead a wandering life; and the only regularity they know or practise, is to act upon a systematic scheme of spoliation. They prevent any from forming a fixed settlement who are inclined to attempt it; for although the fruitfulness of the soil would abundantly repay the labour of settlers, and render migration wholly unnecessary, even if the population were increased more than tenfold; yet the Bedouins forcibly deprive them of the means of subsistence, compel them to search for it elsewhere, and, in the words of the prediction, literally *cause them to wander.* "It may be remarked generally of the Bedouins," says Burckhardt, in describing their extortions in this very country, "that wherever they are the masters of the cultivators, the latter are soon reduced to beggary by their unceasing demands."² "The oppressions

¹ Porter, vol. ii, p. 198, note.

² Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 381.

of the government on the one side, and those of the Bedouins on the other, have reduced the fellah (cultivator) of the Haouran to a state little better than that of the wandering Arab. Few individuals, either among the Druses or Christians, die in the same village in which they were born."¹

O ye that dwell in Moab, leave the cities and dwell in the rock, and be like the dove that maketh her nest in the sides of the hole's mouth. For the fields of Heshbon languish, and the vine of Sibmah: the lords of the heathen have broken down the principal plants thereof—and gladness is taken away, and joy out of the plentiful field; and in the vineyards there shall be no singing, neither shall there be shouting; *the treaders shall tread out no wine in their presses; I have made their vintage shouting to cease.* O vine of Sibmah, the spoiler is come upon thy summer fruits, and upon thy vintage. I have caused wine to fail from the wine-presses: none shall tread with shouting; their shouting shall be no shouting. "This continued wandering is one of the principal reasons why no village in the Haouran has either orchards, or fruit-trees, or gardens for the growth of vegetables. 'Shall we sow for strangers?' was the answer of a fellah, to whom I once spoke on the subject, and who by the word strangers meant both the succeeding inhabitants, and the Arabs who visit the Haouran in the spring and summer."² "A large part of the fruit and vegetables consumed in the Haouran is brought from Damascus."³ "From Keres to Ayoun the ground is covered with walls, which probably once enclosed orchards as well as cultivated fields."⁴ "We learn from Arab historians that the country around Sulkhad was once rich in vines, (Abulfed. p. 105); and travellers of the present day can see how admirably adapted are the gentle slopes of the mountains,

¹ Burckhardt, p. 299.² Ibid. p. 299.³ Ibid. p. 296.⁴ Ibid. p. 297.

and the sunny plains along their base, for the growth of the vine and the fig. All the declivities that are too steep for plain cultivation, are regularly terraced. The stones that thickly covered the soil in some places have been carefully collected into heaps, and built up in the fences of the fields and vineyards. Fields, vineyards, pastures, villages, cities, all alike deserted; and the few inhabitants that remain behind the barrier of rocks and mountains, drag out a miserable existence,"¹ &c. In a general description of the condition of the inhabitants of that extensive desert which now occupies the place of these ancient flourishing states, Volney, in plain but unmeant illustration of this prediction, remarks, that "the wretched peasants live in perpetual dread of losing the fruit of their labours; and no sooner have they gathered in their harvest, than they hasten to secrete it in private places, and retire among the rocks which border on the Dead Sea."² Towards the opposite extremity of the land of Moab, and at a little distance from its borders, Seetzen relates that there are many families living in caverns; and he actually designates them "the inhabitants of the rocks."³ And at the distance of a few miles from the ruined site of Heshbon, "there are many artificial caves in a large range of perpendicular cliffs, in some of which are chambers and small sleeping apartments."⁴ While cities are desolate without any to dwell therein, rocks are tenanted. But whether *flocks lie down* in the former, *without any to make them afraid*,—or whether men are to be found dwelling in the latter, and are *like the dove that maketh her nest in the sides of the hole's mouth*,—the wonderful transition, in either case, and the close accordance, in both, of the fact to the prediction, assuredly

¹ Porter, vol. ii. p. 187.

² Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 344.

³ Seetzen's Travels, p. 26. See Monthly Review, vol. lxxi. p. 405.

⁴ Captains Irby and Mangles's Travels, p. 473.

mark it, in characters that may be visible to the purblind mind, as the word of that God before whom the darkness of futurity is as light, and without whom a sparrow cannot fall unto the ground.¹

And although chargeable with the impropriety of being somewhat out of place, it may not be here altogether improper to remark, that, demonstrative as all these clear predictions and coincident facts are of the inspiration of the Scriptures, it cannot but be gratifying to every lover of his kind, when he contemplates that desolation, caused by many sins and fraught with many miseries, which the wickedness of man has wrought, and which the prescience of God revealed, to know that all these prophecies, while they mingle the voice of wailing with that of denunciation, are the word of that God, who, although he suffers not iniquity to pass unpunished, overrules evil for good, and makes the wrath of man to praise him, and who in the midst of judgment can remember mercy. And reasoning merely from the "uniform experience" (to borrow a term, and draw an argument from Hume) of the truth of the prophecies already fulfilled, the unprejudiced mind will at once perceive the

¹ Another prediction respecting the dwellers in Moab ought not perhaps to be passed over in silence, although the terms in which it is expressed are not so clear and unambiguous as those to which the observations in the text are confined, and although it may have met its primary fulfilment in a much earlier age. Yet it is so intelligible, that the fact to which it bears an unstrained application, may be left as its sole and adequate exposition: and the continued truth of the prophecy greatly strengthens, instead of weakening the evidence of its inspiration. And how is Moab broken down and spoiled, when, in lieu of the arrogance and exceeding pride and haughtiness of its ancient inhabitants, the following description is characteristic of the wanderers who now possess it! "In the valley of Wale," which is situate in the immediate vicinity of the river *Arnon*, into which the Wale flows, Burckhardt observed "a large party of Arabs Shererat encamped—Bedouins of the Arabian desert, who resort hither in summer for pasturage." Being oppressed and hemmed in by other Arab tribes, "they wander about in misery, have very few horses, and are not able to feed any flocks of sheep, or goats. . . . The tents are very miserable; both men and women go almost naked, the former being only covered round the waist, and the women wearing nothing but a loose shirt hanging in rags about them." *Moab shall be a derision. As a wandering bird cast out of the nest, so the daughters of Moab shall be at the fords of ARNON.* (Burckhardt's Travels, pp. 370, 371. Jer. xlviii. 39. Isaiah xvi. 2.)

full force of the truth derived from experience,¹ and acknowledge that it would be a rejection of the authority of reason as well as of revelation, to mistrust the truth of that prophetic affirmation of resuscitating and redeeming import, respecting Ammon and Moab, which is the last of the series, and which alone now waits futurity to stamp it with the brilliant and crowning seal of its testimony. *Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab in the latter days, saith the Lord.*² *I will bring again the captivity of the children of Ammon, saith the Lord.*³ *The remnant of my people shall possess them.*⁴ *They shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities; the desolations of many generations.*⁵

In the sure word of prophecy, other preparations of the way of the people of the Lord were chronicled of old than that of the casting up of highways.⁶ Arabs and Turks have in ages past been *woes* to other lands than Syria. In the things noted in the Scripture of truth, in which that which shall befall his people *in the latter days* was told to Daniel, it is recorded of the last hostile power (the Turkish) which was to possess the glorious land, and to overthrow many, *But these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.*⁷ Turks dwell in houses; but Bedouins only in tents; and it is because Moab has escaped out of the hands of the Turks, and is given up exclusively to the Bedouin, that no man dwells in houses and in cities which are still entire. These cities were Israel's; and, according to the testimony, shall be Israel's again. With the fall of that power which possesses the glorious land, is expressly, *at that time*, associated the

¹ "Being determined by custom to transfer the past to the future in all our inferences; where the past has been entirely regular and uniform, we expect the event with the greatest assurance, and leave no room for any contrary supposition." (Hume's Essay on Probability, vol. ii. p. 61.)

² Jer. xlviii. 47.

³ Jer. xlix. 6.

⁴ Zeph. ii. 9.

⁵ Isa. lxi. 4; lviii. 12. Ezek. xxxvi. 33, 36.

⁶ Isa. lxii. 10.

⁷ Dan. xi. 41.

standing up of the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people.¹ In like manner, the sixth vial was poured "upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of, or from, the east might be *prepared*."² That vial closes with the gathering together of the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to a place called, in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon. The next and last vial opens with the proclamation, *It is done*. To these testimonies which have their place in the prophetic history of the kingdoms of the world, we advert here, not merely that it may be seen how the final testimony concerning Moab links itself in with many others, and the perpetual or long-continued desolation of that land shall terminate for ever in the completion of the promises for which the forsaken cities wait to be filled with men; but also to show that, though the time is not yet, there are facts, which now have come to light in these latter days, alike unparalleled respecting these deserted cities, and also the people to whom of old the Lord did give them, which none but He who hath declared the end from the beginning, could have foreseen and foretold. Long before Judah was *dispersed* among the nations, Israel was *outcast*. The "lost tribes" of Israel is the name by which they have long been called since they were led captive into Assyria, and have never yet returned from the east the way they went. Till within less than half a century ago, the forsaken cities of Bashan were not known to exist, and many of them have very recently been visited for the first time. Newly, also, has the fact been known that in the distant east, the heads of villages of the Affghans have the title of *Melkim*, or kings, while new proofs, on careful research, have been adduced of their Israelitish origin. These disconnected facts and simultaneous discoveries, concerning outcast Israel and

¹ Dan. xii. 1.

² Rev. xvi. 12.

their existing cities, from which they were led away captive two thousand six hundred years ago, could have no mutual relation now but in the word of Jehovah, with whom a thousand years past are but as yesterday. The drying up of the great river Euphrates, that the way of the kings from the sunrising might be *prepared*, is at once the word of the Ruler among the nations, and of the God of Jacob. And there are other words of his, that wait but for his time to bring back his people to their cities and their houses again: "Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still; therefore my bowels are troubled for him: I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord. Set thee up way-marks, make thee high heaps: set thine heart toward the highway, even the way which thou wentest: turn again, O virgin of Israel, turn again to these thy cities. —How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not return to destroy Ephraim.—They shall tremble as a dove out of the land of Assyria; and I will place them in their houses, saith Jehovah."¹

¹ Jer. xxxi. 20, 21. Hos. xi. 8, 9, 11.

CHAPTER VIII.

IDUMEA OR EDM.

A HEAVIER doom was denounced against the land of Edom, or Idumea: and the testimony of an infidel was the first to show how it has been realised. That testimony, as forming an exposition of itself, may, in a primary view of them, be subjoined to the prophecies, and must have its due influence on every unbiassed mind.

“Concerning Edom, thus saith the Lord of hosts, is wisdom no more in Teman? is counsel perished from the prudent? Is their wisdom vanished?—I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him, the time that I will visit him. If grape-gatherers come to thee, would they not leave some gleanings? if thieves by night, they will destroy till they have enough. But I have made Esau bare, I have uncovered his secret places, and he shall not be able to hide himself.—Behold, they whose judgment was not to drink of the cup have assuredly drunken; and art thou he that shall altogether go unpunished? thou shalt not go unpunished, but thou shalt surely drink of it. For I have sworn by myself, saith the Lord, that Bozrah (the strong or fortified city) shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste, and a curse; and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes.—Lo, I will make thee small among the heathen, and despised among men. Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock (Heb. Selah, or Petra), that holdest the height of the hill: though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord. Also Edom

shall be a desolation; every one that goeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof. As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the Lord, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it.¹ Thus saith the Lord God, I will stretch out mine hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it; and I will make it desolate from Teman.² The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Mount Seir, and prophesy against it, and say unto it, Thus saith the Lord God; I will stretch out my hand against thee, and I will make thee most desolate. I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate.³ Thus will I make Mount Seir most desolate, and cut off from it him that passeth out, and him that returneth.⁴ I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return.⁵ When the whole earth rejoiceth, I will make thee desolate.—Thou shalt be desolate, O Mount Seir, and all Idumea, even all of it; and they shall know that I am the Lord.⁶ Edom shall be a desolate wilderness.⁷ For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof.⁸ Thus saith the Lord concerning Edom,—I have made thee small among the heathen, thou art greatly despised. The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high;—that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground. Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith Jehovah. How are the things of Esau searched out! how are his hidden things sought up! Shall I not destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the Mount of Esau? . . . For the day of the Lord is near upon all the heathen. . . . But upon

¹ Jer. xlix. 7–10, 12, 13, 15–18.

² Ezek. xxxv. 1–4.

⁶ Ezek. xxxv. 14, 15.

⁴ Ezek. xxxv. 7.

⁷ Joel iii. 19.

³ Ezek. xxv. 13.

⁵ Ezek. xxxv. 9.

⁸ Amos i. 11.

Mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions—and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau. . . . And saviours shall come up on Mount Zion to judge the Mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the Lord's.¹ I laid the mountains of Esau and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the Lord of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness."²

Idumea was situated to the south of the land of Moab; it bordered on the east with Arabia Petræa, under which name it was included in the latter part of its history, and it extended southward to the eastern gulf of the Red Sea. A single extract from the Travels of Volney will be found to be equally illustrative of the prophecy and of the fact. "This country has not been visited by any traveller, but it well merits such an attention; for from the report of the Arabs of Bakir, and the inhabitants of Gaza, who frequently go to Maan and Karak, on the road of the pilgrims, there are to the south-east of the lake Asphaltites (Dead Sea), *within three days' journey*, upwards of thirty ruined towns *absolutely deserted*. Several of them have large edifices, with columns that may have belonged to ancient temples, or at least to Greek churches. The Arabs sometimes make use of them to fold their cattle in; but in general avoid them on account of the enormous scorpions with which they swarm. We cannot be surprised at these traces of ancient population, when we recollect that this was the country of the Nabatheans, the most powerful of the Arabs, and of the *Idumeans*, who, at the *time of the destruction of Jerusalem*, were almost as numerous as the Jews, as appears from Josephus, who informs us, that on the first rumour of the march of Titus

¹ Obad. 1, 6, 8, 15, 17–21.

² Malachi i. 3, 4.

against Jerusalem, thirty (twenty) thousand Idumeans instantly assembled, and threw themselves into that city for its defence. It appears that besides the advantages of being under a tolerably good government, these districts enjoyed a considerable share of the commerce of Arabia and India, which increased their industry and population. We know that as far back as the time of Solomon, the cities of Astioum Gaber (Esion Gaber) and Ailah (Eloth) were highly frequented marts. These towns were situated on the adjacent gulf of the Red Sea, where we still find the latter yet retaining its name, and perhaps the former in that of El Akaba, or the end (of the sea). These two places are in the hands of the Bedouins, who, being destitute of a navy and commerce, do not inhabit them. But the pilgrims report that there is at El Akaba a wretched fort. The Idumeans, from whom the Jews took only their ports at intervals, must have found in them a great source of wealth and population. It even appears that the Idumeans rivalled the Tyrians, who also possessed a town, the name of which is unknown, on the coast of Hedjaz, in the desert of Tih, and the city of Faran, and, without doubt, El-Tor, which served it by way of port. From this place, the caravans might reach Palestine and Judea in eight or ten days. This route, which is longer than that from Suez to Cairo, is infinitely shorter than that from Aleppo to Bassorah."¹ Evidence, which must have been undesigned, and which cannot be suspected of partiality, is thus borne to the truth of the most wonderful prophecies. That the Idumeans were a populous and powerful nation long posterior to the delivery of the prophecies; that they possessed a tolerably good government (even in the estimation of Volney); that Idumea contained many cities; that these cities are now absolutely deserted, and that their ruins swarm with enormous scorpions; that it was a commercial

¹ Volney's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 344-346.

nation, and possessed highly frequented marts; that it formed a thoroughfare in ancient times, but yet that it had not then been visited by any traveller; are facts all recorded, or proved to a wish, by this able but unconscious commentator.

Idumea was a kingdom previous to Israel, having been governed first by dukes and princes, afterwards by eight successive kings, and again by dukes, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel.¹ Its fertility and cultivation in the earliest times, are implied not only in the blessings of Esau, whose dwelling was to be the *fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above*,² but also in the condition proposed by Moses to the Edomites, when he solicited a passage for the Israelites through their borders, "that they would not pass through the fields or through the vineyards." The Idumeans were, without doubt, both an opulent and a powerful people. They often contended with the Israelites, and entered into a league with their other enemies against them. In the reign of David they were indeed subdued and greatly oppressed, and many of them were dispersed throughout the neighbouring countries, particularly Phœnicia and Egypt. But during the decline of the kingdom of Judah, and for many years previous to its extinction, they encroached upon the territories of the Jews, and extended their dominion over the south-western part of Judea. Though no excellence whatever be now attached to its name, which exists only in past history, Idumea, including perhaps Judea, as Reland has shown, was then not without the praise of the first of Roman poets.

Primus Idumæas referam tibi, Mantua, palmas.

Virg. Georg. iii. 12.

And of Lucan, (Pharsal. iii. 216.)

Arbustis palmarum dives Idume.

But Idumea, as a kingdom, can lay claim to a higher

¹ Gen. xxxvi. 13-43.

² Gen. xxvii. 39.

renown than either the abundance of its flocks, or the excellence of its palm-trees. The celebrated city of Petra, (so named by the Greeks, and so worthy of its name, on account both of its rocky situation and vicinity,) was situated within the patrimonial territory of the Edomites. There is distinct and positive evidence that it was a city of Edom,¹ and the metropolis of the Nabatheans,² whom Strabo expressly identifies with the Idumeans—possessors of the same country, and subject to the same laws.³ “Petra,” to use the words of Dr Vincent, by whom the state of its ancient commerce was described before its ruins were discovered, “is the capital of Edom or Seir, the Idumea or Arabia Petræa of the Greeks, the Nabatea, considered both by geographers, historians, and poets, as the source of all the precious commodities of the east.”⁴ “The caravans, in all ages, from Minea, in the interior of Arabia, and from Gerrha on the Gulf of Persia, from Hadramaut on the ocean, and some even from Sabea or Yemen, appear to have pointed to Petra as a common centre; and from Petra the trade seems again to have branched out into every direction, to Egypt, Palestine, and Syria, through Arsinoe, Gaza, Tyre, Jerusalem, Damascus, and a variety of subordinate routes that all terminated on the Mediterranean. There is every proof that is requisite, to show that the Tyrians and Sidonians were the first merchants who introduced the produce of India to all the nations which encircled the Mediterranean; so there is the strongest evidence to prove that the Tyrians obtained all their commodities from Arabia. But if Arabia

¹ Petra being afterwards more particularly noticed, some quotations from ancient authors respecting it may here be subjoined.

Πετρα πολις εν γη Εδωμ της Αραβιας. Eusebii Onomast. “Petra civitas Arabiæ in terra Edom.” Hieron. tom. iii. p. 59. Vide Relandi Palæstina, tom. i. p. 70.

² Μητροπολις δε των Ναβαταιων εστιν η Πετρα καλουμενη. Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 779, edit. Paris, 1620, ed. Falc. p. 1106.

³ Ναβαταιοι δε εισιν οι Ιδουμαιοι. Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 760, edit. Falcon. p. 1081.

⁴ Vincent's Commerce of the Ancients, vol. ii. p. 263.

was the centre of this commerce, Petra¹ was the point to which all the Arabians tended from the three sides of their vast peninsula."² "The name of this capital, in all the various languages in which it occurs, implies a rock, and as such it is described in the Scriptures, in Strabo, and Al-Edrisi."³

About 800 years before Christ, Amaziah, the king of Judea, took Selah (or Petra, both names alike signifying a rock) after having slain 10,000 Edomites.⁴ Five hundred years thereafter, it withstood the repeated assaults of Demetrius, who marched suddenly against it to take it by surprise: and he who afterwards entered Babylon, retreated from before the capital of Edom.⁵ Petra, subsequently to its subjugation by the Nabathean Arabs, was termed the capital of Arabia, or more properly of Arabia Petræa: and a race of kings who reigned there under the names of Obodas and Aretas, were each successively designated "the king of Arabia." Three hundred years after the last of the prophets, and nearly a century before the Christian era, Alexander Janneus, king of Judea, having taken several cities of the Idumeans and neighbouring nations, was defeated by Obodas, lost his army, and scarcely escaped with his life. Aretas, the successor of Obodas, who next reigned at Petra, "a person very illustrious" (*επιδοξος*) discomfited and slew Antiochus Dionysius, king of Syria; and Cœlesyria was added to his dominions. When Hyrcanus, the son of Alexander, was dispossessed of his kingdom by his elder brother Aristobulus, Antipater, an Idumean of great wealth, the father of Herod the Great, urged him to flee for aid to "the king of Arabia," and conducted him to "Petra, where

¹ Agatharchides Huds. p. 57. Plinii Hist. Nat. lib. vi. cap. xxviii. quoted by Vincent, *ibid.* p. 262.

² *Ibid.* pp. 260-262.

³ Vincent's *Commerce of the Ancients*, vol. ii. p. 264.

⁴ 2 Kings xiv. 7.

⁵ Diod. Sic. tom. viii. p. 416. Prideaux.

the palace of Aretas was.”¹ On the promised restoration by Antipater, as soon as he should be repossessed of his kingdom, of the twelve cities and territory which his father had taken² from the Arabs or Nabatheans, Aretas, at the head of 50,000 men, horse and foot, marched against Aristobulus, conquered him in battle, and, advancing with all his army, entered Jerusalem, and having united the forces of the Jews with his own, pressed vigorously the siege of the temple—which was only raised by the advance of the Romans to the aid of Aristobulus.³ At a period posterior as well as prior to the commencement of the Christian era, there always reigned at Petra, as Strabo relates, a king of the royal lineage, with whom a prince or procurator, denominated his brother, was associated in the government.⁴ In the beginning of the second century, Petra, though its independence was lost, was still the capital of a Roman province, or the reputed metropolis of Arabia; and, as its coins attested, the Emperor Adrian added his name to that of the city:⁵ it long continued to be the capital of the third Palestine—*Palestina tertia sive salutaris*; and, as such, was also the metropolitan see of fifteen bishoprics pertaining to that province.⁶

The ancient state of Idumea cannot in the present day be so clearly ascertained from the records respecting it, which can be gleaned from history, whether sacred or profane, as by the wonderful and imperishable remains of its capital city, and by “the traces of many towns and villages,” which indisputably show that “it must once have been thickly

¹ Εἰς Πέτραν ὅπου βασιλεῖα ἦν τοῦ Ἀρετα. Joseph. Ant. lib. xiv. c. l. sect. 4.

² Viz. Medaba, Naballo, Livias, Tharabasa, Agalla, Athone, Zoara, Oronæ, Marissa, Rydda, Lyssa, and Oryba. Ibid.

³ Joseph. Ant. c. ii. sect. l, ed. Falc. p. 1107.

⁴ Strabo, p. 779.

⁵ Petra est Arabiæ metropolis, quo spectant nummi, in quibus ΑΔΡΙΑΝΗ ΠΕΤΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ legitur, &c. Vide Relandi Palest. tom. ii. p. 931.

⁶ Ibid. tom. i. p. 315, &c.

inhabited.”¹ Not merely can it admit of no dispute, that the cities of Idumea subsisted in a very different state from that absolute desolation which, long prior to the period of its reality, was represented in the prophetic vision ; but there are prophecies regarding it, especially those in the thirty-fourth chapter of Isaiah, that have yet a prospective view, and which refer to the time when “ the children of Israel shall possess their possessions,” or to “ the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion.” But, difficult as it has hitherto been to ascertain those existing facts, and precise circumstances, which form the strongest features of its desolate aspect, (and that ought to be the subject of scientific as well as of religious inquiry,) enough has been discovered to show that the sentence against it, though fulfilled by the agency of nature and of man, is precisely such as was first recorded in the words of the prophets.

Edom shall be a desolation. Judea, Ammon, and Moab, exhibit so abundantly the remains of an exuberant fertility, and the means of reviving it, that the wonder arises in the reflecting mind, how the barbarity of man could have so effectually counteracted, for so many generations, the prodigality of nature. But such is Edom’s desolation, that the first sentiment of *astonishment* on the contemplation of it, is, how a wide extended region, now diversified by the strongest features of desert wildness, could ever have been adorned with cities, or tenanted for ages by a powerful and opulent people. Its present aspect would belie its ancient history, were not that history corroborated by “ the many vestiges of former cultivation,” by the remains of walls and paved roads, and by the ruins of cities still existing in this ruined country.

The total cessation of its commerce ; the artificial irrigation of its valleys wholly neglected ; the destruction of all

¹ Burckhardt’s Travels in Syria, p. 436.

the cities, and the continued spoliation of the country by the Arabs; the permanent exposure, for ages, of the soil unsheltered by its ancient groves, and unprotected by any covering from the scorching rays of the sun: are causes which may have all combined their baneful operation in rendering Edom *most desolate, the desolation of desolations*. Volney's account is sufficiently descriptive of the desolation which now reigns over Idumea; and the information which Seetzen derived at Jerusalem respecting it, is of similar import. He was told "that at the distance of two days' journey and a half from Hebron, he would find considerable ruins of the ancient city of Abde, and that for all the rest of the journey he would see *no place of habitation*: he would meet only with a few tribes of wandering Arabs."¹ From the borders of Edom, Captains Irby and Mangles beheld a boundless extent of desert view, which they had hardly ever seen equalled for singularity and grandeur. And the following extract, descriptive of what Burckhardt actually witnessed, cannot be more graphically abbreviated than in the words of the prophet.—"It might with truth," says Burckhardt, "be called Petraea, not only on account of its rocky mountains, but also of the elevated plain already described,² which is so much covered with stones, especially flints, that it may with great propriety be called a *stony desert*, although susceptible of culture; in many places it is overgrown with wild herbs, and *must once have been thickly inhabited*; for the traces of many towns and villages are met with on both sides of the Hadj road, between Maan and Akaba, as well as between Maan and the plains of the Hauran, in which direction are also many springs. At present all this country is a desert, and Maan (Teman)³ is the only inhabited place in it.⁴ I will

¹ Seetzen's Travels, p. 46.

² Sheera (Seir) the territory of the Edomites, pp. 410, 435.

³ See map prefixed to Burckhardt's Travels.

⁴ Burckhardt's Travels, p. 436.

stretch out mine hand against thee, O Mount Seir, and I will make thee most desolate. I will stretch out my hand upon Edom,—and I will make it desolate from Teman, &c. But I have made Esau bare. Edom shall be a desolate wilderness.

“The ascent (of Mount Hor), for a considerable distance up the side of the mountain, is not very steep; and we saw many ruined terraces, the evidences and remains of a flourishing agriculture, which, in the prosperous days of Edom and Petra, clothed many of these now sterile mountains with fertility and beauty. . . . The splendid ruins and monuments of Petra, however, are alone sufficient to demonstrate the wealth and civilization of the kingdom of which it was the metropolis. Fields of wheat and some agricultural villages still exist in the eastern portion of Edom; but, with very slight exceptions, the country is blighted with cheerless desolation and hopeless sterility. The hill-sides and mountains, once covered with earth and clothed with vineyards, are now bare rocks. The soil, no longer supported by terraces and sheltered by trees, has been swept away by the rains. The various contrivances for irrigation, which even now might restore fertility to many considerable tracts, have all disappeared. Sand from the desert, and the debris of the soft rock of which the mountains are composed, cover the valleys that formerly smiled with plenty. The rays of a burning sun have imparted to the whole region a dark and gloomy hue, which harmonizes well with the melancholy detail of its desolations.”¹

Of the remains of ancient cities still exposed to view in different places throughout Idumea, Burckhardt describes “the ruins of a large town, of which nothing remains but broken walls and heaps of stones; the ruins of several villages in its vicinity;² the ruins of an ancient city

¹ Olin's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 15, 55.

² Burckhardt's Travels, p. 418.

consisting of large heaps of hewn blocks of silicious stone; the extensive ruins of Gherandel, Arindela, an ancient town of Palæstina Tertia."¹ "The following ruined places are situated in *Djebal Shera* (Mount Seir) to the south and south-west of Wady Mousa; Kalaat, Djerba, Basta, Eyl, Ferdakh, Anyk, Bir el Beytar, Shemakh, and Syk. Of the towns laid down in D'Anville's map, Thoana excepted, no *traces* remain."² Laborde passed the ruins of Elana, a town in Wady (valley) Pambouchebe, of another in Wady Sabra, where there are the ruins of a theatre and several temples—and of Ameime, where there are the remains of numerous cisterns excavated from the rock, into which the water flowed by an aqueduct nine miles in length. *I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate. O Mount Seir, I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return.*

Malachi, the last of the prophets, who wrote two hundred years after Ezekiel, and above three hundred after Isaiah, speaks of the heritage of Esau as *laid waste for the dragons of the wilderness*. But he adds, *Whereas Edom saith, we are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the Lord, They shall build, but I will throw down*. In recording the invasion of Demetrius, about three hundred years before the Christian era, into the land of Edom, Diodorus describes the country as desert, and the inhabitants as living without houses; nor does he mention any city in that region but Petra alone. Yet the names of some of the cities of Arabia Petræa, enumerated by Josephus, as existing at the time when the Romans invaded Palestine—the names of eighteen cities of Palestina Tertia, of which Petra was the capital, and the metropolitan see, in the times of the Lower Empire—and the towns laid down in D'Anville's map, together with

¹ Burckhardt's Travels, p. 441.

² Ibid. pp. 443, 444.

the subsisting ruins of towns in Edom, specified by Burckhardt, and also by Laborde—give proof that Edom, after having been impoverished, did return and build the desolate places; even as “the ruined towns and places,” still visible and named, show that though the desolate places were *built again*, according to the prophecy, they have, as likewise foretold, been *thrown down*, and are “ruined places” lying in utter desolation.

While the cities of Idumea, in general, are thus most desolate, and while, so far as yet known, the ruins themselves are as indiscriminate as they are undefined in the prediction, (there being nothing discoverable, as there was nothing foretold, but their excessive desolation, and that they shall not return,) there is one striking exception to this promiscuous desolation, which is alike singled out by the inspired prophet, and by the scientific traveller.

Burckhardt gives a description, of no ordinary interest, of the site of an ancient city which he visited, the ruins of which not only attest its ancient splendour, but they “are entitled to rank among the most curious remains of ancient art.” Though the city be desolate, the monuments of its opulence and power are durable. These—as described by Burckhardt in his passing visit,—are, a channel on each side of the river, for conveying the water to the city; numerous tombs; above two hundred and fifty sepulchres or excavations; many mausoleums, one in particular of colossal dimensions, in perfect preservation, and a work of immense labour, containing a chamber sixteen paces square, and above twenty-five in height, with a colonnade in front thirty-five feet high, crowned with a pediment highly ornamented, &c.; two large truncated pyramids, and a theatre with all its benches, capable of containing about three thousand spectators, *ALL cut out of the rock*. In some places these sepulchres are excavated one over the other, and the

side of the mountain is so perpendicular that *it seems impossible to approach the uppermost*, no path whatever being visible. "The ground is covered with heaps of hewn stones, foundations of buildings, fragments of columns and vestiges of paved streets, all clearly indicating that a large city once existed here. On the left bank of the river is a rising ground, extending westward for nearly three quarters of a mile, entirely covered with similar remains. On the right bank where the ground is more elevated, ruins of the same description are to be seen. There are also the remains of a palace and of several temples. In the eastern *cliff* there are upwards of fifty separate sepulchres close to each other."¹ These are not the symbols of a feeble race, nor of a people that were to perish utterly. But a judgment was denounced against the strongholds of Edom. The prophetic threatening has not proved an empty boast, and it could not have been the word of an uninspired mortal. *I will make thee small among the heathen. Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock (Selah, or Petra), that holdest the height of the hill: though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord. Also Edom shall be a desolation.*

These descriptions, given by the prophet and by the observer, are so analogous, and the precise locality of the scene, from its peculiar and characteristic features, so identified,—and yet the application of the prophecy to the fact so remote from the thoughts or view of Burckhardt, as to be altogether overlooked,—that his single delineation of the ruins of the chief (and assuredly the strongest and best fortified) city of Edom was deemed in the first edition of this treatise, and in the terms of the preceding paragraph, an illustration of the prophecy, alike adequate and legiti-

¹ Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, pp. 422-432.

mate. And though deprecating any allusion whatever of a personal nature, and earnest only for the elucidation of the truth, the author yet trusts that he may here be permitted to disclaim the credit of having been the first to assign to the prediction its wonderful and appropriate fulfilment; and it is with no slight gratification that he is now enabled to adduce higher evidence than any opinion of his own, and to state, that the self-same prophecy has been applied by others—with the Bible in their hands, and with the very scene before them—to the self-same spot. Yet it may be added, that this coincident application of the prophecy, without any collusion, and without the possibility at the time of any interchange of sentiment, affords, at least, a strong presumptive evidence of the accuracy of the application, and of the truth of the prophecy; and it may well lead to some reflection in the mind of any reader, if scepticism has not barred every avenue against conviction.

On entering the pass which conducts to the theatre of Petra, Captains Irby and Mangles remark:—"The ruins of the city here burst on the view in their full grandeur, shut in on the opposite side by barren craggy precipices from which numerous ravines and valleys branch out in all directions; the sides of the mountains covered with an endless variety of excavated tombs and private dwellings, (*O thou that dwellest in the clefts of THE ROCK*, &c.—Jer. xlix. 16,) presented altogether the most singular scene we ever beheld."

In still farther confirmation of the identity of the site, and the accuracy of the application, it may be repeated, in the words of Dr Vincent, that "the name of this capital, in all the various languages in which it occurs, implies a rock, and as such it is described in the Scriptures, in Strabo, and Al Edrissi."¹ And in a note he enumerates among the various names having all the same signification—Selah, a

¹ Commerce of the Ancients, vol. ii. p. 264.

rock, (the very word here used in the original,) Petra, a rock, (the Greek name, which has precisely the same signification,) and The Rock, pre-eminently—expressly referring to this passage of Scripture.¹ Petræa, according to Bochart, no mean authority, was so called from its metropolis Petra, of which the Hebrew name was Selah, and the Arabic, Hagar; Selah being the very same among the Hebrews, and Hagar among the Arabians, as Petra among the Greeks; this name was given to the city because rocky mountains overhung it—of which the Arabian geographer states that *houses are there excavated in the rock*.² This testimony, however high the authority, is yet enhanced by the fact, that it was given long before the ruins of Petra were discovered, or the prediction applied to the fact.

Captains Irby and Mangles, having, together with Mr Bankes and Mr Legh, spent two days in diligently examining them, give a more particular detail of the ruins of Petra than Burckhardt's account supplied; and the more full the description, the more precise and wonderful does the prophecy appear. Near to the place where they entered Wady Mousa, "the high land was covered upon both its sides, and on its summits, with lines and solid masses of dry wall. The former appeared to be traces of ancient cultivation, the solid ruins seemed to be only the remains of towers for watching in harvest and vintage time. The whole neighbourhood of the spot bears similar traces of former industry; all which seem to indicate the

¹ See Blaney, *in loco*.

² Cum Petræa dicatur—a metropoli *Petra*, cujus Hebræum nomen *Selah*. 2 Kings xiv. 7, et Isa. xvi. 1, et Arabicum *Hagar*, *Geograph. Nub. Clim.* iii. part 5. Hebræis autem *Selah* et Arabibus *Hagar* id ipsum sunt quod Græcis *Petra*; atque hoc nomen urbi inditum, quia illi imminent saxosi montes, de quibus ita Geographus Arabs—*Hagar est arx pulchre sita inter montes—suntque ibi domus excisæ in petra*. Hos montes Arabica voce *Agar*, id est, *Petram*, appellat Paulus, Gal. iv. 25, tanquam urbi cognomines. Bochart Phaleg. lib. iv. c. xxvii. c. 275, 276. Edit. Lugd. Bat. 1712.

vicinity of a great metropolis.”¹ A narrow and circuitous defile, surrounded on each side by precipitous or perpendicular rocks, and forming “a sort of subterranean passage,” opens on the east the way to the ruins of Petra. The rocks, or rather hills, then diverge on either side, and leave an oblong space, where once stood the metropolis of Edom, deceived by its terribleness, where now lies a waste of ruins, encircled by rocks or cliffs, which still show how the pride and labour of art tried there to vie with the sublimity of nature. Along the borders of these cliffs, detached masses of rock, numerous and lofty, have been wrought into sepulchres, the interior of which is excavated into chambers, while the exterior has been cut from the live rock into the forms of towers, with pilasters, and successive bands of frieze and entablature, wings, recesses, figures of animals, and columns.

“Tombs present themselves, not only in every avenue to the city, and upon every precipice that surrounds it, but even intermixed almost promiscuously with its public and domestic edifices; the natural features of the defile grew more and more imposing at every step, and the excavations and sculpture more frequent on both sides, till it presented at last a continued street of tombs.” The base of the cliffs wrought out into all the symmetry and regularity of art, with colonnades and pedestals, and ranges of corridors adhering to the perpendicular surface; flights of steps chiselled out of the rock; many grottos, “which are certainly not sepulchral;” some excavated residences of large dimensions, in one of which is a single chamber, sixty feet in length, and of a breadth proportioned; other dwellings of inferior note, particularly abundant in one defile leading to the city, the steep sides of which contain a sort of excavated suburb, accessible by flights of steps; niches,

¹ Captains Irby and Mangles's Travels, p. 402.



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Highway leading to the Rock

Road cut in the Rock

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Acropolis

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Temple

Temple

Temple

Temple

Steps on the

sometimes thirty feet in excavated height, with altars for votive offerings, or with pyramids, columns, or obelisks; some small pyramids hewn out of the rock on the summit of the heights; horizontal grooves for the conveyance of water, cut in the face of the rock, and even across the architectural fronts of some of the excavations; and, in short, "the rocks hollowed out into innumerable chambers of different dimensions, whose entrances are variously, richly, and often fantastically decorated with every imaginable order of architecture;"¹—all united not only form one of the most singular scenes that the eye of man ever looked upon, or the imagination painted—a group of wonders perhaps unparalleled in their kind—but also give indubitable proof, both that in the land of Edom there was a city where human ingenuity, and energy, and power must have been exerted for many ages, and to so great a degree, as to have well entitled it to be noted for its strength or *terribleness*, and that the description given of it by the prophets of Israel was as strictly literal as the prediction respecting it is true. "The barren state of the country, together with the desolate condition of the city, *without a single human being* living near it, seem," in the words of those who were spectators of the scene, "strongly to verify the judgment denounced against it."² *O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, &c. Also Edom shall be a desolation, &c.*

"The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock (Heb. Selah, or Petra), *whose habitation is high.*—*Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle*, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord."

"Petra," says Miss Martineau, "might be said to begin from that first excavation. For nearly an hour longer we

¹ Captains Irby and Mangles's Travels, pp. 407–437. Maemichael's Journey, pp. 228, 229.

² Irby and Mangles's Travels, p. 439.

were descending the pass, seeing first, hints at façades, and then, more and more holes clearly artificial. . . . The rocks became more and more wild and stupendous, while, wherever they presented a face, there were pediments and pilasters, and ranges of doorways, and little flights of steps scattered over the slopes. A pair of eagles sprang out and sailed over head, scared by the noise of the strangers. . . . Down we went, and still down, among new wonders, long after I had begun to feel that this far transcended all I had ever imagined. . . . On the left were yet more portals in the precipice, so high that it was inconceivable how they were ever reached. The longer we stayed, and the more mountain temples we climbed to, the more I felt that the inhabitants, among their other peculiarities, must have been winged.”¹

The description given by Volney, and depending for its accuracy on the authority of Arabs, formed till recently the only account of the modern state of Idumea; and though the testimony was recorded in a manner and came through a channel the most unsuspected possible, yet the evidence was not sufficiently direct or discriminating to mark, as Volney had otherwise done, the exact, prophetic, and characteristic features of the scene. The interesting details, from personal observation, communicated by Burckhardt, and subsequently by Captains Irby and Mangles, rescued the subject from obscurity, and brought to light the remarkable fact of the ruins of “a city” surrounded with rocks, in the midst of the desert.

When, in the streets of Jerusalem, the people shouted hosannahs to the Son of David, and while some of the Pharisees among the people said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples, he answered and said unto them, *I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately*

¹ Martineau's *Eastern Life*, vol. ii. pp. 313, 320.

cry out. And in an infidel age, while many modern cities and nations disowned the authority of the God of Israel and disbelieved his word, those of ancient times stood forth anew before the world, like witnesses arisen from the dead, to show the authority, the power, and the truth of his word over them, and to raise a warning and instructive voice to the *cities of the nations*, lest they too should become the monuments of the wrath which they have defied. And when men would not hear of hosannahs to the Son of David, or of divine honours to the name of Christ, deserts immediately spake and rocks cried out, and, responding to the voice of the prophets, testified of those who testified of Jesus. The capital of Edom, as well as the capital of other ancient kingdoms, was heard of again; and its rocks now send forth a voice that may well reach unto the ends of the earth.

It entered not into the thoughts of the writer, and far surpassed his hopes, when first led to look into the prophecies concerning Edom, from the statement of an Arab report recorded by Volney, that in so short a time the fulfilment of these prophecies might be set before the eyes of men, even without their having to "come and see." And after having adduced new evidence in successive editions of this treatise from striking facts, clearly illustrative of the predictions relative to Edom, and to its once terrible metropolis, an appeal may now be made to the sight as well as to the understanding of men. For while the sixth edition of this treatise was passing through the press, the author timely received from Paris (and would that that city would give heed to the truth, which it thus farther affords the means of confirming!) the first six livraisons of a work entitled, *Voyage de l'Arabie Petre par Mess. Leon de Laborde et Linant*, then in the course of publication, which contains, in the numbers first published, seventeen splendid engravings of

the ruins of Petra alone, in which, by merely affixing a text, the beauties of art become immediately subservient to the interests of religion. To these, others have been added, and the splendid work has been completed. Where, very recently, it was difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain a single fact, and where only indirect evidence could be obtained, men may now, as it were, look upon the ruins of the chief city of Edom, of which the very existence was till lately altogether unknown. A better idea may be formed of the site of Petra from the plan of it by Count Laborde, than by any additional verbal description. All the plates attest its vast magnificence, and the almost incredible and inconceivable labour, continued as it must have been from age to age, prior to the days of Moses and later than the Christian era, by which so great a multiplicity of dwellings and mausoleums were excavated from the rock. And Truth speaks out, not from the lips of a lying spirit evoked by the fancy of a sceptical philosopher, but from the face of the live rock, which exhibits the excavations in the *clefts*, singularly characteristic of the scene, and declares by the order of architecture, as if still told by every stroke of the chisel, that the citizens of Petra did *build* after the era of the prophets; while the fragments of ruins, of Grecian and Roman architecture, as well as of more ancient date, which are strewed over the ground, and cover the valley which was the site of the city, and which is surrounded by precipitous hills and excavated rocks, show that these buildings, whose doom was pronounced before their erection, have, according to the same sure word, been *thrown down*.

The explicit testimony of Laborde here enhances the value of his precious engravings. It is, he states, "from the summit of El Nakb, that one can judge of the general aspect of the country, of the melancholy and dismal charac-

ter of which it is difficult to convey an idea with the pencil alone. But the prophetic description surpasses that of the pen or pencil of man, however gifted the painter, or however graphic the delineation. For he immediately adds, "Many prophets have announced the misery of Idumea, but the strong language of Ezekiel can alone come up to the height, or reach the acme, of this great desolation."¹ *Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Mount Seir, and prophesy against it, and say unto it, Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, O Mount Seir, I am against thee, and I will make thee most desolate. I will lay thy cities waste, and when the whole earth rejoiceth I will make thee desolate. I will make Mount Seir most desolate, and cut off from it him that passeth out and him that returneth. I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return, and ye shall know that I am the Lord.*²

One engraving, the view of an isolated column, is peculiarly striking, as indirectly exemplifying the *unique* character of the scenery, by which, at a glance, Petra is identified. The design of the picture is to represent an isolated column. But the back-ground exhibits to view "a part of the valley of Moses" (Ouadi Mousa), some of those high rocks in the more distant perspective, which are pierced with many excavations (*percés de milliers excavations*). Other plates present to view the magnificence of Petra. There is one tomb, of which a view is given, which is particularly deserving of notice, as there is engraven on it a Latin inscription, with a name of a magistrate, Quintus Prætextus Florentinus, who died in that city, being governor of that part of Arabia

¹ On peut juger ainsi de leur élévation et de l'aspect général du pays, dont le triste et lugubre caractère est difficile à transporter avec l'aide seule du crayon. Plusieurs prophètes avaient annoncé le malheur de l'Idumée; mais la forte parole d'Ezechiel peut seule s'élever à la hauteur de cette grande désolation.—*Voyage*, p. 61.

² Ezek. xxxv.

Petræa. "It behoved to be," it is said, "about the time of Adrian or Antoninus Pius," or at a period unquestionably several centuries posterior to the latest of the predictions.

Elaborate descriptions of splendid scenes by the pen of travellers, are, as Laborde remarks, sometimes charged with being exaggerated. But the views which he gives of the Khasne of Petra, show that the verbal description might be highly wrought, and yet come short of the truth; even as he and others remark, that the pencil itself can convey only an inadequate representation of "the magnificent edifice," which, to this day, is only slightly defaced.

The previous testimonies to recently ascertained facts, sufficient to constitute conclusive evidence, have been retained as in preceding editions; for illustrations of literal prophecies from literal facts, wherever these are undoubtedly established and rightly applied, admit not of change, like imaginative expositions. When a Scriptural command, in reference to a prophetic *vision*, was disregarded, and men would not *wait for it*, while it *tarried* till the *appointed time*, when, as *made plain upon tables*, it should *speak and not lie*, a symbolical significancy could alone be attached in ancient times to the judgments on Edom and the proudest of its cities, when Aretas reigned in his "palace at Petra," or when that city was the capital of a Roman province, or a metropolitan see in Christian times. Jerome, for example, could not see this vision as the prophet saw it, while the inhabitants of Edom, as he testifies, continued to dwell in excavated habitations, or in the cliffs of the rocks. It was too early then for the expositor to see those things which the prophets had written, and, not reading these predictions literally, Christian writers readily interpreted them after the manner of the Jewish, substituting the enemies of the church for the enemies of Israel, as symbolised by Edom or the Edomites. Judgments indeed fell—or began to fall—

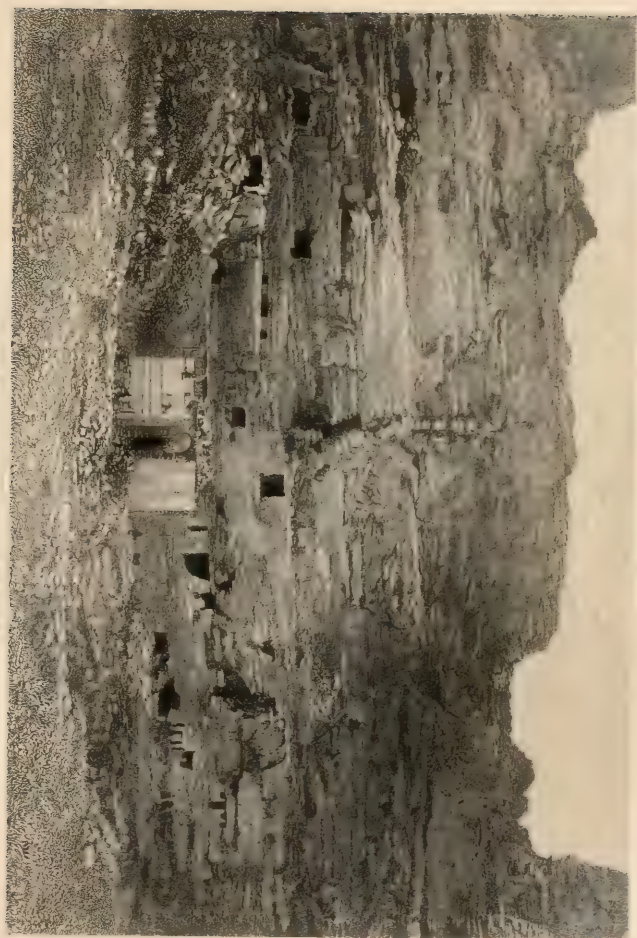
on Edom in times anterior to that era; others rest upon it still, as it now speaks for itself; and it has yet to bear witness to other prophecies. The distinction has to be drawn not only between figurative and literal predictions, of which the latter have been trenching greatly on the former as men would construe them,—but also between accomplished and unaccomplished prophecies; that the former be not made to occupy the place of the latter, as men, we are free to confess, are yet prone to err. But this truth may here be *plain*, that as in fact Edom was *confederate* in ancient days with Ammon and Moab against Israel, so, in fact also, their capital cities as well as their territories, now themselves own their fealty, and yield their united homage *to the word* of the Lord of hosts, the Holy One of Israel.

Though the attempt did fail to reach the chief cities of Ammon and Moab, that the light of the sun reflected from their ruins might be made to vindicate the oracles of its Creator, and their exclusive right to be their own interpreters of his word to them—some of the wonders of Petra, that have not been overcharged, may here be seen as they are set forth by the daguerreotype, which, for truth's sake, may claim its right to supersede the labours of the pen and the pencil, however elaborate or excellent they be.

The only *building* “which has resisted the ravages of time,” is marked in the plan of Laborde, *Serail Pharaon*, (or palace of Pharaoh,) which he designates “ruined temple.” He thus describes it:—“Situating to the west of the city, on the banks of the river, it towers over the innumerable debris, or wrecks of buildings, which cover the soil, and yet presents, though in ruins, a beautiful mass, and beautiful details of architecture. The cornice which surmounts the temple, is in a pure and elegant style.” “The arch of triumph,” says Dr Robinson, “seems to have formed the approach to the palace or pile of building beyond, which the Arabs call

Kusr Far'on, 'Pharaoh's Castle,' the distribution of the interior (of which) into several chambers and stories, seems to show conclusively, that it was not a temple."¹ The same building (see plate) is described by Lord Claud Hamilton. "A square palace, near to the triumphal arch, is the only edifice of masonry standing. I entered it and examined the interior. The wooden joints still remain in the walls, apparently strong and sound. The ground is strewn with portions of the roof, hewn stones, and portions of the cornice, amongst *which, numbers of thistles, prickly plants and nettles grow*. At first, I was not certain about the nettles; but, wishing to ascertain their identity, I put my hand to them, and though they had not the force of English nettles, yet they gave a pungent feeling, which, if the plant were stronger, would amount to a sting. They had exactly the leaf; but it was late in the season, so that want of moisture had probably weakened them. Thus there were *nettles* in the only palace that the proud city of Petra contains erect. *Thorns come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof*." The testimony of the Rev. R. Woolmer Cory of Pembroke College, Cambridge, as adduced in many former editions, was communicated to the author by his brother, to whom, after visiting Petra, he thus wrote, "The common English black thorn and bramble are very common in Petra; and a plant more prickly than either, and also regular, old, stinging nettles." "Both in the interior of the palace" and in what must have been its adjoining enclosures, according to the more recent testimony of Dr Wilson, there are many bushes and shrubs growing, such as we should expect to find in any similar body of ruins, as brooms, thistles, nettles, thorns, and others of a like sort. It is impossible to look at them in the place in

¹ Vol. ii. p. 524.



which they are found, without recalling to mind the language of the prophet, *Thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof,*" &c. The writer may here add, that on first entering the ruined edifice through a narrow opening in the wall, he unconsciously put his foot among some rank nettles, in full vigour in early summer, the stinging properties of which, satisfied with the sense of sight, he had no need or inclination to try. Such is now, as seen in the plate, the last erect structure of this proud capital of Idumea. Its other walls, as seen in the view taken by Laborde, are shattered, and partly fallen, to the base. The lower part of a column in front is nineteen feet in circumference, equal to those of the grand temple of Baalbec. The thickness of the wall of the palace is upwards of eight feet. Part of a fallen column is about five feet in diameter. But not one now stands to decorate the ruin.

The gateway, or "triumphal arch," near it, has a fragment left, which, though it be not a noble ruin, so stands alone, like the broken edifice to which, by a paved way, it led, that though no longer a memorial of some long-forgotten victory of the once *terrible* Edomites, has enough left to be a monument of their metropolis, and of the triumph, that shall never be forgotten of the word of the Lord over that capital of the enemies of Israel, all prostrate around it.

Hemmed in by precipitous cliffs and rocky hills, at least two miles in circumference, at the elevation of more than two thousand feet above the great valley of the Araba, in Mount Seir, the city built by "the people of the Lord's curse," has now no power but to testify, like other cities of that land, that his threatening to *throw down*, however often it was *rebuilt*, is *perfect work*. Such indiscriminate and indefinable ruins resemble those of many other cities, even of Judah and of Israel, as of Ammon and of Moab,

and of far mightier cities than these, however proud, that extended without obstruction over a far wider space: but as the prophet, in uttering forth the words of the God of truth against Edom, spake of those who, deceived in their terribleness and the pride of their hearts, dwelt in the *clefts of the rock*, or of Selah, and made their nests as high as the eagle, it is not in the bottom of a valley, however high the elevation of its site, that the full completion of such judgments are to be found. And more than the “desolate heap” of the capital of Moab, or the stables and couching-places of Ammon, the cliffs that environ the old metropolis of Edom,—not more clearly demonstrative of Scriptural inspiration, though reduced more humiliatingly to a “court for owls,”—have, on their discovery, awakened a higher interest, and command a greater *astonishment*, than the wide-spread ruins of any city of a plain. Its possessors, long after the *irresistible word* of the living God had gone forth against it, might, not without seeming cause, exult in the *pride of their hearts*; and they have left works for the wonder of the world, though in vain as to their own glory or the endurance of their city or their race, they made their own *nests as high as the eagle*, or hewed themselves sepulchres out of the rocks.

The first glance at the indiscriminate ruins of the rock-girt city, low as they can lie, may—because of the circumscribed space they occupy, which is apparently diminished by the height of the precipitous cliffs—have lowered the high expectations of some stranger from a far land; but the more closely and the more fully that the environing rocks and ravines are examined, the more does wonder rise at the ancient grandeur and existing desolation of that “renowned emporium of commerce,” all *bare* and empty now, in which nothing of its departed glory remains that ruthless spoliators or wild beasts could destroy or devour, and not a bone is

to be found in its sepulchres, reputed or real, while oleanders blossom like flowerets round a rifled tomb, and briars, and thorns, and thistles take their appointed place in the palaces and fortresses thereof.

But as a question has been raised whether any of these excavations were *dwellings*, and as it has been stated, after a disturbed visit of a single day, that they exhibit no trace of having been constructed for habitations, though at the same time it be confessed that, at a later period, they may not improbably have been thus used, there may be here a call for clear and conclusive evidence, that at least some of them were *dwellings in the clefts of the rock*. Those travellers, we apprehend, who, without disturbance, have most leisurely and fully examined these excavations, render their express testimony, on full conviction, that in ancient times many of them were obviously dwellings. Captains Irby and Mangles state, that "there are grottos in great number, which are certainly not sepulchral." They describe the sides of the mountain as "covered with an endless variety of excavated tombs and private dwellings, presenting altogether the most singular scene they ever beheld."¹ Lord Claud Hamilton as unhesitatingly states, that "many of these excavations have been intended for the living, as they contain several apartments." "Days and weeks," says Lord Lindsay, "might be spent here if every excavation were visited. We left the valley after revisiting the Kasne, and exploring several of the excavated dwellings; for it is clear, I think, both from the language of Scripture, and the *appearance of the caves themselves, that the majority, if not all of them, were the abodes of the living, not of the dead*. Such is Petra. *Thy terribleness hath deceived thee—O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock.*"

¹ Irby and Mangles, p. 129.

That the houses of Petra were excavated in the rock is expressly related by the geographer, Edrisi ; and Jerome, in the fifth century, also testifies that the inhabitants of Edom, from Petra to the borders of Judea, dwelt in caves.

Count Portalis, formerly Prussian Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople, and afterwards a member of the Prussian government—than whom a more acute and intelligent observer has not visited Petra—kindly favoured the author with the following extract from his Journal, on this point to which he gave special attention: “ It is probable that, in a climate so warm as that of Arabia Petrea, and in a country whose rocks were so marvellously adapted for artificial excavations, and which contained so many natural ones besides—the first inhabitants would have preferred caverns—cool and dry—to houses such as we now inhabit; and it was not till a later period, and when Petra had become a flourishing city, that the houses of hewn stones—the remains of which are seen in the central valley of this strange city—were constructed. These new buildings, however, did not cause the abandonment of the ancient usages. The windows which are frequently seen in the strange edifices, cut out of the lateral walls of the *sike*, and of the valley into which it opens, show that these constructions were, in part at least, if not all, dwellings and not tombs. I am indeed inclined to believe, that those of the excavations which served for the sepulture of the dead, were devoted to this purpose at a later period, and that this change took place at the time when Petra was a Roman colony. Besides the windows which we noticed in several of these edifices, we saw here and there holes in the rocks above the entrance of the cells, which holes were evidently intended for the insertion of joists belonging to a part of the edifice now ruined, and constructed in front of the

excavations. Thus the excavations were only a part of the houses of the old Nabathean city, and served as sleeping places and dwelling chambers for the family, while in front of these cool retreats were raised reception chambers, such as the Orientals at the present day call *le salamlík*. Most of the large excavations show evident traces of constructions *in front* of the wall of rock from which they are hewn; and as, besides, these interior façades contain often windows, it is difficult to conceive how many travellers who have successively visited Petra, have seen in it nothing but tombs."

Dr Wilson, in his able and learned work on the Lands of the Bible, states that there is a great multitude of excavations on both sides of the defile by which the brook of Wadi Musa makes its escape through the rocks. Along the adjoining cliffs are many excavations connected with two terraces, and rising one above another, but much broken and injured, in the staircases leading to them. We spent more than a couple of hours in exploring them; for though they were not very remarkable in point of art, being of the most simple construction, many of them unequivocally appeared to us to have been the abodes of the living, and not of the dead. In these excavations we sometimes found apartments and recesses which did not at all appear fitted for the reception of coffins or sarcophagi, but obviously intended for family convenience. Some of them have windows as well as doors. In front of two or three of them are receptacles for water. They are approachable by a common way, exactly such as the wants of living inhabitants would suggest," &c.¹

Some notes taken by the writer of these pages on the spot may, in more minute detail, be subjoined in confirmation of the fact, that other excavations in Petra bear unequivocal

¹ Vol. i. p. 312.

proofs that they were constructed for habitations, and were actually *dwellings* in the rock.

On the opposite side of the valley, near the great tomb, with three rows of columns (as marked in Laborde's chart,) of part of which, with the adjoining structure, a daguerreo-type view is given,—one excavation, about fifteen feet square, and sixteen high, so far as not filled up with rubbish, which keeps the rocky floor from view, had but one small recess, (one foot four inches by one foot ten,) and had manifestly been divided into two apartments in depth, the upper lighted by a window and supported by beams, the open resting-places of which are seen on the opposite sides; another chamber beside it is about thirteen feet square, without any inner recess, about the same height, and a very high door-way, as if for light, but no window. At the distance of half a mile from the "Great Tomb," along the same cliff to the north, where *tombs* are marked in the plan, there are a number of apartments nearly contiguous, all of which, so soon as entered, seemed manifestly designed for the living and not for the dead. There, on the north-east side of the valley, one excavation is thirty-nine feet by thirty-eight, in which there are no inner excavations, and the only recess is a small cubical one of seven feet. The door is about ten feet high, and nearly seven broad, with a window on each side, and three windows above, exactly in the same manner as if formed for an upper storey, the central one being larger than those on the sides. The whole apartment is well lighted; and on its base the central part is lower than the sides, which form, as it were, a raised seat or divan, on the end, and on both sides. The central part forms an area twenty-eight feet and a-half by twenty-two; the elevation forms three sides of a parallelogram, regularly cut and raised at least two feet eight inches above the floor, with a step, or rather seat, a few inches lower, cut all around. The whole



BABYLON

TEMPLE OF BEL

Engraving of the Temple of Bel at Babylon, from a drawing by Mr. G. S. Smith, published in the Illustrated London News, 1845.

is finished with perfect regularity. The excavation has incomparably more the appearance of a dwelling than of a tomb. Beside it, is another apartment, similarly formed and *benched*, without any cavities, twenty-three feet by twenty-two, having a side chamber with a window. In both, there are openings for bars to the doors. Close by is a circular excavation seemingly an oven.¹ On the same ledge of rock a third chamber, with two openings or windows, is about nineteen feet square; and a fourth, at the foot of a connecting staircase, twenty feet and a half by seventeen feet four inches. (Others are close around.) In none of these are there any recesses for the dead, as in those that ultimately at least may have been used for tombs. Beyond this cluster of apartments, which would have formed no mean suite of chambers for a prince of Edom, is a chamber, with two windows, sixteen feet nine inches by fifteen and a half, of precisely similar construction, with a *lower place* in the centre, and an upper along three of the sides, with a step or seat between them; and so well adapted are they for the purpose for which the writer doubted not, as he saw them, that they were designed, that while he took these notes upon the spot, (as literally transcribed for the printer,) one Arab, who had aided him in the measurements, sat down upon the seat, while another, who brought in a lizard about a foot long, seemingly fatigued with his search after animals of any sort, stretched himself at full length on the *bare* and uncushioned *divan*, while the writer stood in the servant's place, with a measuring-line and a note-book in his hand. Two openings, or windows, as well as the door, lighted the apartment, in which there is not the slightest appearance of any excavation for a corpse. The place, like many others, was manifestly designed for the living, not for the dead, as

¹ In the opposite cliff, near other dwellings, Irby and Mangles noted "particularly an oven."

much as the oven beside them. Exactly similar in every respect, though smaller, is a contiguous apartment.

While noting these *dwellings*, now *bare* as the rock, wholly deserted by man, but open to owls, it may do more than mark the locality to other travellers, to say that there on a higher ascent stands a chair of stone cut from the rock, in an open excavated space, with a block projecting from the centre, the pedestal it may have been—as the grooved space behind seems to indicate,—of one of the *gods of Edom*, who was not likely exalted there to preside over tombs, though his own seat, if such it was, be now as empty as are both the dwellings and the tombs of his worshippers.

In a cliff on the opposite end of the city, between the theatre and the Kasne, the writer measured several excavations varying from fourteen to twenty-one feet square, though sometimes oblong, in only one of which was there any recess, and that too, like many others in different places, of rude and seemingly later construction. In one the only niche was three feet four inches by two feet, and only fifteen inches in depth, and could never have been designed for a tomb. Outside another, which is twenty feet square, seats along the wall, on both sides of the door, were not constructed for the dead. The excavation with four windows, as seen in the daguerreotype plate, is thirty-three feet long, nearly twenty-one wide, and twenty-five feet high, above the rubbish with which the floor is covered. At one end there is a separate chamber, with a long inner door, and a window, and a smaller chamber in the opposite end, above which is another with an inner door, and a window, as seen in the plate. Where all is empty and bare, every needful indication exists, that all these, and doubtless innumerable more, were *dwellings in the clefts of the rock*.

But though proofs were multiplied indefinitely, that



THE TEMPLE

excavated dwellings in the face of the cliffs were all empty now, the evidence would not thereby be exhausted. It is written, "Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, that holdest *the height of the hill*, though thou shouldst *make thy nest as high as the eagle*, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord. Also Edom shall be a desolation, every one that goeth by it shall be *astonished*." The El-Deir (see plate) is excavated from one of the highest peaks of the hills that environ Petra, and is nearly on a level with the top of Mount Hor surmounted by Aaron's tomb, over against it. Cut out of the rock which flanks it on both sides and in front, it is still entire, an *astonishing* excavation. It speaks for itself as to its form and its beauty, which is still inferior to that of the Kasne. Its length across the front is 152 feet, its height about equal; and its lower columns, as they spring from the wall, are about twelve feet in *semi-circumference*. Its magnitude may thus be estimated, to convey an idea of which the artist has introduced three figures, of six feet in proportionate height. It seems to have been a temple, when Edom had its gods. But there, and in the now "savage scenery around," as Lord Lindsay terms it, a testimony may be raised, for the God of gods, who laid the foundation of the everlasting mountains, and who said of Edom, *though thou shouldst make thy nest as high as the eagle*, I will bring thee down from thence. There once stood more than that temple of rock, on the heights of these cliffs of Selah. The temple stands, but the worshippers and all their destructible works are gone.

Fronting that *height of the hill* out of which this marvelous structure was wrought, is an open area two hundred and sixty feet broad, on which are foundations of walls, hewn stones, and fragments of pottery, a large circular line,

which cannot show of what it is the vestige, while the opposite peak is encircled with foundations of a wall, and covered with fallen ruins of ancient buildings, where all is now utterly destroyed, and the fine mosaic of old, seemingly once a tessellated pavement, is reduced, in large quantities, into the very diminutive and well formed squares, of which it was originally constructed. Within that height or peak, once built all over, reaching nearly to its surface is an excavation, upwards of ten yards in length, and nearly the same width. Every ledge of rock seems there to have been occupied by man; and fallen masonry fronts excavated dwellings.

The result of Count Portalis's observations was thus recorded in his Journal:—"The route which conducts to the Deir, is a road carefully cut out in the rock; this road had evidently a double object, for besides that it was a means of communication between the lower city and the sort of acropolis on which the Deir stands, it served to conduct the rain-water into the numerous cisterns which are found from place to place. The purpose to collect the rain-water is clearly shown by the artificial channels intended to concentrate it towards one point, and canals cut in the fissures of the rock. With a soil of rocks which art had transformed into innumerable channels and reservoirs, with numerous and carefully constructed cisterns which are met with at every step, one may conceive how Petra could formerly have contained and supplied with water a numerous population. There must have been abundance of water in this vast reservoir of rocks, towards which there opened all the gorges and gigantic fissures of this circle of natural walls. The ground around the *Deir*, and that of the detached hill which surmounts it, *is covered with fragments of pottery and the debris of masonry, and the rocks near it are filled with excavations of all forms and sizes, and with staircases con-*

ducting to them. May not this have been the acropolis, the almost inaccessible place of refuge of the Nabathean city? Behind the *Deir* a narrow and impassable gorge penetrates into the rock. In it is an aqueduct partly cut in the rock—partly constructed of masonry. We can scarcely suppose that this arid, elevated, and isolated rock contained a spring; but probably if this aqueduct was traced, it would lead to vast cisterns or tanks for the supply of this portion of the city, which I am inclined to regard as the acropolis of Petra.”

Identical with this was our own opinion formed on the spot. There can here be no question as to the date of these constructions, that can have anything to do with that of the inspiration of this prophetic record. *Though thou shouldst make thy nest as high as the eagle,* is the form of this denunciation against Edom. They who dwelt in the clefts of the rock, or of Selah or (Petra) and held the height of the hill, *did build their nest as high as the eagle*, as the eagles around still fly out of *their* undeserted nests to testify; and the Lord has executed his word, and brought those down, who could not have built their nests higher than they did. An aged anchorite, for many a year past, has been the self-constituted guardian of the tomb of Aaron, and has there taken up his abode. But no man remains where many dwelt, to keep watch or ward over the deserted temples of the gods of Edom, whether in the bottom of the valley or on the height of the hill. The *nests* which men did *build* in Selah are all *pulled down*. Their *dwellings* in the rock are consigned to other occupants, and even where they became tombs, these are all empty and bare, and the dead have not been suffered to repose in them.

“It was immediately clear to me,” says Miss Martineau, “that little is remaining also of the rock-abodes, in comparison with what once existed. I think that travellers

have not only much underrated the number of rock-dwellers, but failed to perceive that what remains are the mere *débris* of what the precipices once presented to view. An observant eye may detect remnants of stucco ornaments very high up many rocks, and in great numbers. Again, many of the excavations are so difficult to reach, and some are such mere walls or surfaces, that it appears as if the whole front of the rock, to a considerable depth, had fallen. . . . Again, the conduits, cisterns, and flights of steps scattered over the rocks and among the precipices, indicate a larger number of rock-dwellings than remain now, very great as that number is.

“And how very great it is! I began with a notion that I should like to count them, having read that they were about two hundred. With this two hundred running in my head (as one never gets over believing what one reads), I continued for some days to think of these rock abodes as computable by hundreds, till I was startled by hearing one of the gentlemen wonder how many thousands there were, as he pointed up two or three ravines, counting the holes in a single rock face, and reminded me how small a proportion these bore to the whole. I was indeed astonished. I could not admit the full extent of the marvel at the moment; but I soon saw that he was right. . . . Dr Robinson’s conclusion that these excavations were all tombs, except the few which might have been temples, appeared to us on the spot very extraordinary. Elsewhere rock-tombs are, or have been, sealed up; contain, or have contained, dead bodies; and may be counted by dozens to a large city, each containing many bodies. Here they are standing wide open; no dead body (except of a modern Arab or two) has ever been found in them; and they exceed any number of houses that the city can ever have contained. . . . The scriptural expressions relating to such a district as this, speak of

habitations as well as sepulchres. Isaiah speaks of one 'that graveth an habitation for himself in a rock' (Isa. xxii. 16); and Jeremiah exclaims, 'O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock.' Obadiah, again, declares his message to be 'concerning Edom,' when he says, 'thou who dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high,' &c. 'There shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau,' the prophet goes on to say; and mournful indeed is the vacuity now. Every deserted place is mournful enough; but nowhere else is there desolation like that of Petra, where these rock doorways stand wide, still fit for the habitation of a multitude, but all empty and silent, except for the multiplied echo of the cry of the eagle, or the bleat of the kid. No; these excavations never were all tombs. In the morning the sons of Esau came out, and at night the yellow fires lighted up from within, tier above tier, the face of the precipice."¹ At the entrance to the pass, "the excavations again begin to abound; and for about a mile we had all about us white rocks, squared into towers, hollowed into vaults, and cut out into abodes and baths consisting of many chambers, and adorned with pediments, &c."²

Lord Claud Hamilton, who, together with Lord Rokeby and Mr Littleton, visited Petra in 1839, thus bears witness to the predicted desolation which has come on Edom and its capital. After quoting some of these prophecies, he adds, "Nothing can exceed the desolation of its present condition, although the signs of its former wealth and power are so durable as to have remained many centuries after it was deserted, and they look as if as many more may pass over them without working any visible change. The commencement of the prophecy has been most wonderfully fulfilled, for although it was beyond the foresight of man to imagine that so wealthy and powerful a city should be deserted and

¹ Martineau's *Eastern Life*, vol. iii. pp. 2, 5.

² *Ibid.* p. 14.

desolate, yet all human works and habitations are subject to a like fate,—but the words, ‘I will make thee small among the heathen,’ have been actually accomplished to such a degree that the very site of Petra has for centuries been unknown. That a great city should be thus swept from the memory of man, and blotted out, for a long season, from the knowledge of the world, is a most striking manifestation of the truth of the prophetic record, and utterly exceeded all human foresight and sagacity. But every step in this country exhibits some wonderful fulfilment of the doom which was pronounced while it was flowing with riches and teeming with inhabitants; every specific misfortune has overtaken this devoted kingdom, and yet there are innumerable remains of what it once was.”

A few extracts from Lord Claud Hamilton’s graphic description of Petra will be interesting to the reader:—

“Following a path which wound amongst undulating hills and rocks, we gradually found ourselves surrounded by the peculiar remains of this singular locality. On both sides were curiously shaped tombs, either excavated from the living rock, with fanciful exteriors, or boldly cut out from it, and standing apart in square masses with ornamented façades, and surmounted with battlements, steps, small pyramidal forms, and other devices, equally hewn out from the mountain. Many of these excavations may have been intended for the living, as they contain several apartments. On the left the abrupt cliffs rise to a great height, and towering over the undulated site of the ancient capital, exhibit on their pierced sides numerous marks of the industry and peculiar taste of the inhabitants of Selah. In front is an extensive space, partially covered with grass, shrubs, and ruins, and intersected with ravines, in which it is evident that streams formerly flowed; beyond, some lower hills from the eastern horizon, whilst to the right

another lofty range of precipitous hills hem in the valley, and present a continued line of splendid façades, and noble excavated temples and palaces, which at once strike the beholder as the most extraordinary sight that the imagination can conceive.—Nothing can exceed the singularity of the general aspect: nor do the excavations lose any of their marvels on a nearer approach. Having passed the single column of which Laborde speaks, and also the square palace and triumphal arch, the full and distinct view of the wondrous line of magnificent excavations burst on my sight. It is impossible by any description to convey an idea of the general aspect of this most extraordinary place, where art and nature seem to have striven for the mastery, and each has contributed to render it alike the most wonderful and instructive sight that can possibly be surveyed by man. The high cliffs of the northern boundary present to view an endless variety of excavations, dwellings, tombs, and temples.”

The theatre of Petra, like that of Ammon, is not the least remarkable memorial of its populousness and wealth, constructed, as it was, for the simultaneous and transient assemblage of the gayest of its citizens, and not, though both be equally empty now, like the tombs, for the permanent abode of the successive generations of its nobles. As measured by the same intelligent and observant traveller, “it consists of thirty-eight rows of high steps or of stone benches, of which the uppermost is one hundred and fifty-two paces in length.” The length of the lowest row of seats, as measured by the writer, is two hundred and thirty-eight feet, and that of the middle three hundred and forty-five. The theatre was thus capable of containing, exclusive of the spaces for passages, upwards of seven thousand persons. But how different now is a scene there from what it was, when the capital of Edom, deceived by its terribleness, and fearless of danger, was given to its

pleasures, and the shout of a multitude may have been heard in triumph. With other feelings the solitary sojourner of a day, as may be farther related in facts, not painted in fancy, contemplates the scene of desolated grandeur over which the word of the Lord is triumphant.

“It was the season of full moon. I went out to enjoy the fine effect produced by the shades amongst these high cliffs, and to contemplate this scene of departed grandeur in the stillness of night, which so well accorded with its desolate appearance. Nothing could exceed the beauty of the evening. The clear sky spangled with innumerable bright stars, whilst the light which rules the night cast its fine pale beams on the many temples, palaces, dwellings, and tombs that every cliff and rock presented; their numbers, inexplicable situations, and apparent want of arrangement and system, rendered the scene indescribably interesting. I chose the theatre as one point of observation. There, alone, surrounded by tenantless cliffs, I tried to conjure up some of the many scenes which had been enacted there, when the rocks resounded with the applauses of assembled thousands, and this deserted spot was crowded with the noble, the great, and the wealthy, brilliant with light, and gorgeous from the dresses of the spectators—the power and glory of Edom seemed as a dream which could not be credited. Turning homewards again, the view of the open ground, the arch, the square palace, and the cliff beyond, was peculiarly striking.

“The springs have been dried up to such an extent as to render the renewal of the general fertility of Edom impossible. In the vicinity of the theatre of Petra, and in other places along the course of the stream, reeds and shrubs grow luxuriantly, oleanders and wild figs abound, and give proof that a little cultivation would again cover the rock, and fill the cliffs with the numberless gardens

which once adorned them. The traces of former fertility are innumerable; and it is likewise evident, that every spot capable of sustaining vegetable life was carefully watered and cultivated. There are numerous grooves in the rocks to convey the rain water to tombs, or to the little clefts in which even now figs are found. Every spot capable of being so protected has been walled up, however small the space gained, and however difficult the means of securing it. The ancient inhabitants seem to have left no accessible place untouched. They have exhibited equal art and industry in eliciting from the grand walls of their marvellous capital whatever the combination of climate, irrigation, and botanical skill could foster in the scanty soil that was afforded them. The hanging gardens must have produced an enchanting effect amongst the noble buildings of the town when it was in all its glory.”¹

*I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return; and ye SHALL KNOW THAT I AM THE LORD.*² “EVERY ONE THAT GOETH BY IT SHALL BE ASTONISHED.”³ “I would,” says a recent traveller, “that the sceptic could stand as I did, among the ruins of this city among the rocks, and there open the sacred book and read the words of the inspired penman, written when this desolate place was one of the greatest cities in the world. I see the scoff arrested, his cheek pale, his lip quivering, and his heart quaking with fear, as the ruined city cries out to him in a voice loud and powerful as that of one risen from the dead,—though he would not believe Moses and the prophets, he believes the hand-writing of God himself in the desolation and eternal ruin around him.”⁴ “If I had never stood on the top of Mount Sinai,

¹ Lord Claud Hamilton's Journal.

² Ezekiel xxxv. 9.

³ Jerem. xlix. 17.

⁴ Incidents of Travels, by Stephens, p. 68.

I should say that nothing could exceed the desolation of the view from the summit of Mount Hor, its most striking objects being the dreary and rugged mountains of Seir, bare and naked of trees and verdure, and heaving their lofty summits to the skies, as if in a vain and fruitless effort to excel the mighty pile, on the top of which the high-priest of Israel was buried. Before me was a land of barrenness and ruin, a land accursed of God, and against which the prophets had set their faces; the land of which it was thus written in the Book of Life, *Son of man, set thy face against Mount Seir, and prophesy against it, and say unto it, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O Mount Seir, I am against thee, and I will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will make thee most desolate,*" &c., &c.,—(Ezek. xxxv.)¹

They shall call them, The border of wickedness. Strabo contrasts the quiet disposition of the citizens of Petra with the contentious spirit of the foreigners who resided there; and the uninterrupted tranquillity which the townsmen mutually maintained together, excited the admiration of Athenodorus.² The fine gold is changed: no such people are now to be found there. Though Burckhardt travelled as an Arab, associated with them, submitted to all their privations, and was so completely master of their language and of their manners, as to escape detection, he was yet reduced to that state within the boundaries of Edom, which alone can secure tranquillity to the traveller in the desert; "he had nothing with him that could attract the notice, or excite the cupidity of the Bedouins," and was even stripped of some rags that covered his wounded ankles.³ The Arabs in that quarter, he observes, "have the reputation of being very daring thieves." In like manner a Motselim (governor),

¹ Incidents of Travels, p. 71.

² Strabo, p. 779.

³ Burckhardt's Travels, p. 433.

who had been twenty years in office, pledged himself to Captains Irby and Mangles, and the travellers who accompanied, (in presence of the governor of Jerusalem,) that the Arabs of Wady Mousa are a "most savage and treacherous race," and added, that they would make use of their Frank's blood for a medicine. That this character of wickedness and cruelty was not misapplied, they had too ample proof, not only in the dangers with which they were threatened, but by the fact which they learned on the spot, that upwards of thirty pilgrims from Barbary had been murdered at Petra the preceding year, by the men of Wady Mousa.¹ Even the Arabs of the surrounding deserts, as already stated, dread to approach it; and towards the borders of Edom on the south, "the Arabs about Akaba," as described by Pococke, and as experienced by Burckhardt, "are a very bad people, and notorious robbers, and are at war with all others."² Such evidence, all undesignedly given, clearly shows that in truth Edom is CALLED *the border of wickedness*.

I have made thee small among the nations; thou art greatly despised. Contrasted with what it was, or reckoned among the nations, Edom is small indeed. Within almost all its boundary it may be said that none *abide*, or have any fixed or permanent residence; and instead of the superb structures, the works of various ages, which long adorned its cities, the huts of the Arabs, where even huts they have, are mere mud hovels of "mean and ragged appearance," which, in general, are deserted on the least alarm. But miserable habitations as these are, they scarcely seem to exist anywhere throughout Edom, but on a single point on its borders; and wherever the Arabs otherwise wander in search of spots for pasturage for their cattle, (found in

¹ Irby and Mangles's Travels, p. 417. Macmichael's Journey. pp. 202, 234.

² Pococke's Description of the East, vol. i. p. 136.

hollows, or near to springs after the winter rains,) tents are their only covering. Those which pertain to the more powerful tribes, are sometimes both numerous and large; yet, though they form at best but a frail dwelling, many of them are "very low and small." Near to the ruins of Petra, Burckhardt passed an encampment of Bedouin tents, most of which were "the smallest he had ever seen, about four feet high, and ten in length;" and towards the southwest border of Edom, he met with a few wanderers who had no tents with them, and whose only shelter from the burning rays of the sun, and the *heavy dews of night*, was the scanty branches of the Tahl trees. The subsistence of the Bedouins is often as precarious as their habitations are mean; the flocks they tend, or which they pillage from more fertile regions, are their only possessions; and in that land where commerce long concentrated its wealth, and through which the treasures of Ophir passed, the picking of gum arabic from thorny branches is now the poor occupation, the semblance of industry practised by the wild and wandering tenants of a desert. Edom is *small among the nations*; and how *greatly is it despised*, when the public authorities at Constantinople denied any knowledge of it, or of the ruins of its capital—when the city of Petra was thus forgotten and unknown among the representatives of the villagers of Byzantium!

Concerning Edom, thus saith the Lord of hosts, Is wisdom no more in Teman? is understanding perished from the prudent? Shall I not destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau? Fallen and despised as it now is, Edom,—did not the prescription of many ages abrogate its right,—might lay claim to the title of having been the first seat of learning, as well as the centre of commerce. While splendid remains of ancient art give undoubted proof that wisdom and under-

standing subsisted in the mount of Esau after the age of the prophets, the first of modern philosophers thus speaks of the wisdom of the Edomites in the earliest ages. "The Egyptians *having learned the skill of the Edomites*, began now to observe the position of the stars, and the length of the solar year, for enabling them to know the position of the stars at any time, and to sail by them at all times without sight of the shore; and thus gave a beginning to astronomy and navigation."¹ "It seems that letters, and astronomy, and the trade of carpenters, were invented by the merchants of the Red Sea, and that they were propagated from Arabia Petræa into Egypt, Chaldea, Syria, Asia Minor, and Europe."² While the philosopher may thus think of Edom with respect, neither the admirer of genius, the man of feeling, nor the child of devotion will, even to this day, seek from any land a richer treasure of plaintive poetry, of impassioned eloquence, and of fervid piety, than Edom has bequeathed to the world in the book of Job. It exhibits to us, in language the most pathetic and sublime, all that a man could feel, in the outward pangs of his body, and the inner writhings of his mind, of the frailties of his frame, and of the dissolution of his earthly comforts and endearments; all that mortal can discern, by meditating on the ways, and contemplating the works of God, of the omniscience and omnipotence of the Most High, and of the inscrutable dispensations of his providence; all *that* knowledge which could first tell, in written word, of Arcturus, and Orion, and the Pleiades; and all that devotedness of soul, and immortality of hope, which—with patience that faltered not even when the heart was bruised, and almost broken, and the body covered over with distress—could say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

¹ Sir Isaac Newton's Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms, p. 208.

² Ibid. p. 212.

But if the question now be asked, *is understanding* perished out of Edom? the answer, like every response to the prophetic word, may be briefly given: it is. The minds of the Bedouins are as uncultivated as the deserts they traverse. Practical wisdom is, in general, the first that man learns, and the last that he retains. And the simple but significant fact already alluded to, that the clearing away of a little rubbish, merely "to allow the water to flow" into an ancient cistern, in order to render it useful to themselves, "is an undertaking far beyond the views of the wandering Arabs," shows that *understanding is indeed perished from among them*. They view the indestructible works of former ages not only with wonder, but with superstitious regard, and consider them as the work of genii. They look upon an European as a magician, and believe that, having seen any spot where they imagine that treasures are deposited, he can "afterwards command the guardian of the treasure to set the whole before him."¹ In Teman, which yet maintains a precarious existence, the inhabitants possess the desire without the means of knowledge. The Koran is their only study, and contains the sum of their wisdom.—And although he was but a "miserable comforter," and was overmastered in argument by a kinsman stricken with affliction, yet no *Temanite* can now discourse with either the wisdom or the pathos of *Eliphaz* of old. *Wisdom is no more in Teman, and understanding has perished out of the mount of Esau.*

Knowledge shall be the stability of the times of the Messiah. Of the times of the restitution or restoration of all things, God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets. The final commission of Jeremiah, as of all the prophets, was *to build and to plant*. Of Edom alone it is written, *Thy cities shall not return; when the whole earth*

¹ Burckhardt's Travels, p. 429.

rejoiceth I will make thee desolate. The predicted degree of the desolation of the cities and of the land of Israel, while a testimony to the infallibility of the word of God in the present day, is a token of the future. The cities of Moab, in which no man dwells, while witnesses of the same truth, are also a similar sign, empty as they are, for their finally destined possessors. While the spirit of prophecy thus forbids that its words, which describe the existing desolation of the lands and cities of Israel, of Ammon, and of Moab, should be poetically interpreted as having reference only to times that are past, seeing that they all still point to the future, there are testimonies concerning Idumea, which show that its final judgments have not yet fallen on it, but are still reserved for the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion, ere the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.

“The Father judgeth no man,” said Christ, “but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.” “All things,” he said again, “that are written in Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me, must be fulfilled.” “I would not, brethren,” says Paul, in his epistle to the church at Rome, “that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.—For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance, (without change of purpose).” There is a coming year, “the year of my redeemed;” there is a coming day, “the day of recompences for the controversy of Zion;” and in Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, Seir, Edom, or Idumea is so named in the controversy of that day as

the scene of judgments on his enemies, that, in the word of the Lord, all nations are invoked to hear.

The Song of Moses, which begins, "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth," thus ends, "See now that I, even I, am he. . . . If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment, I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh; and that with the blood of the slain, and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy. Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people; for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people." "And this is the blessing wherewith Moses, the man of God, blessed the children of Israel before his death. And he said, The Lord (Jehovah) came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from Mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them," &c.¹ In the Psalms it is written, "O God, thou hast cast us off.—Turn thyself to us again.—That thy beloved may be delivered, save with thy right hand, and hear me.—God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice: I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth. Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver; Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe: Philistia, triumph thou because of me. Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into *Edom*? Wilt not thou, O God, who hadst cast us off?—He it is that shall tread down our enemies."² In Isaiah it is written again and again respecting judgments of which *Idumea*, or *Edom*, is the scene, "in the day of vengeance"

¹ Deut. xxxii. 1, 39-43; xxxiii. 1-3.

² Ps. lx. cviii.

and "the year of my redeemed," "The Lord hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies.—Prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people. Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh.—Thou shalt be called, Sought out, a city not forsaken. Who is this that cometh from *Edom*, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.—I have trodden the wine-press alone.—For I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury.—For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.—I will bring down their strength to the earth. I will mention the loving-kindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel. . . . So he was their Saviour."¹ "Look upon Zion,—thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, &c.—For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us.—The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.—Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it. For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them; he hath delivered them to the slaughter.—All the host of heaven shall be dissolved.—For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold it shall come down upon *Idumea*, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. For the sword of the Lord is filled with

¹ Isa. lxii. 8-12; lxiii. 1-7, &c.

blood.—For the Lord hath a *sacrifice in Bozrah, a great slaughter in the land of Idumea*.—For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion. And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go forth for ever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever. But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness. They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing. And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: it shall be an habitation of dragons, and a court for owls. The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate. Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read; no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them. And he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line: they shall possess it for ever, from generation to generation shall they dwell therein. The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. . . . And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”¹

¹ Isa. xxxiii. 20-24; xxxiv.; xxxv. 1, 2, 10.

Ungodliness is not yet turned from Jacob; the people are not yet forgiven their iniquity; Jerusalem is not yet a quiet habitation, or a tabernacle, of which not one of the stakes shall ever be taken down; nor is the day of the Lord's vengeance, or the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion yet come.

But, as other preparations are in these days for the first time seen, as the cities of Israel's land are desolate without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and a tenth, but not more, now in the land, gleanings left because of the children of Israel, it is not a departure from the testimony, nor a breach of the commandment, "Seek ye out of the book of the Lord and read," to inquire, whether, in the record of this judgment, of which Idumea is the scene, there is not a proof of its divine inspiration, and a preparation, in part at least, for that coming day, in the animals that are gathered there; while the ancient proud metropolis of Idumea is bare and desolate, and empty but for them; and while ancient towns of Israel, with their houses, great and goodly, are entire, waiting in readiness for their destined possessors, till the controversy shall be past.

Dr Olin, who speaks of the figurative and poetic style of prophecy, in testifying of his impressions at Petra says, as if this vision of Isaiah had already its full and final accomplishment, "I was often reminded of the prediction of the prophet, Isa. xxxiv., by the multitude and noise of the wild fowls, 'each answering to its mate.'"

They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing. But though these be invoked in vain, where princes and nobles dwelt in the chief city of the kingdom, dragons have their habitation, and owls their court; birds of prey their nests, and the wild beasts of the desert their home, and, as if called by their names, they meet where there are

now no nobles to convene, no *kingdom* to which they can be called, no man to dwell.

Thorns come up in the palaces of Edom ; nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof. The princes are *nothing* : none of the nobles are there ; but other occupants are not wanting, and it is both *a habitation of dragons* and *a court for owls*. Dr Shaw represented the land of Edom, and the desert of which it now forms part, as abounding with a variety of *lizards and vipers*, which are very numerous and troublesome :¹ and Volney relates that the Arabs, in general, avoid the ruins of the cities of Idumea, on account of the enormous scorpions with which they swarmed. “So plentiful,” as observed by Mr Cory, “are the scorpions in Petra, that though it was cold and snowy, we found them under the stones, sometimes two under one stone ; and I have no doubt,” he adds, “that there are vast numbers of them in the summer-time, as well as *serpents*, which the natives say there are.” “The creeping things,” according to the testimony of Dr Wilson, “which are found in the ruins of Petra, are so numerous, that the place, like all others, I suppose, of a similar character in the country, may be characteristically spoken of as ‘an habitation for dragons.’ The Fellahin, in the space of a few minutes, caught for us some scores of lizards, chameleons, centipedes, and scorpions. It literally swarms with them.”² He gives a delineation from nature of some of them which he carried to Britain. We also saw many of these “creeping things ;” and on first asking an Arab at Petra if he could show us a scorpion, he almost immediately brought one on the point of a sharp stick, with which he had pierced it through, from under the first stone which he raised ; another escaped. Serpents were said to be very numerous in summer. *I have laid his (Esau’s)*

¹ Shaw’s Travels, vol. ii. pp. 105, 330.

² Lands of the Bible, vol. i. p. 329. Vol. ii. p. 738.

heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. It is a habitation for dragons,—and a court for owls.

Captains Irby and Mangles relate, that while they and their fellow-travellers were examining the ruins and contemplating the sublime scenery of Petra, “the screaming of the *eagles, hawks, and owls*, who were soaring above their heads in considerable numbers, seemingly annoyed at our approaching their lonely habitation, added much to the singularity of the scene.” While the screaming of the eagles, hawks, and owls, which in considerable numbers soared over their heads, was heard in the day-time by one party of travellers, others (Laborde, &c.), who more lately followed them, and remained longer on the spot, relate, in a like incidental manner, that at night the *screech-owl* was heard above the rest. When Dr Wilson and his companions lodged among the ruins of Petra, they “enjoyed the midnight concert of both owl and owlet. Among the birds which we noticed, or which the Fellahin told us are to be found there, or in the neighbourhood, are the eagle, ossifrage (akab), kite, hawk, great owl, small owl, and raven,—the partridge and the pterocles, and the kifud,”¹ &c. One traveller (quoted by Dr Wilson,) “states, that there is abundant evidence of the complete fulfilment of the prophecies against Edom, without descending to minute and literal details, &c., and that he neither saw nor heard the screech-owl.” The bird of night, if undisturbed, may keep within its court by day; and sleep may seal up the ears against its loud cry by night. But the same witness also states, that he observed “some white *vultures, which were generally seen in pairs*, soaring above the valley, or perched upon the rocks.” *It shall be a court for owls. The screech-owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. There shall the great-owl make her nest, and lay and hatch, and*

¹ Lands of the Bible, vol. ii. p. 337.

gather under her shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate, or, according to the strictest literality, "in pairs."

At Petra we saw as well as heard eagles, vultures, and owls. Several of the last were scared in the day-time from their *nests*, as the author passed some of the excavations, and he saw at once at least two different species, one of which was very large. Of eagles and vultures, or other ravenous birds, there are, as of owls, different species. And as each or any of these is known to man, and can be distinguished even at night, or when unseen, by its peculiar scream; so, now that the cry of a wild beast, or the sound of a reptile, or the screaming of a bird of prey, are the only forms or signs of recognition among the tenants of the capital of Edom, it is thus that *they are gathered together, every one with her mate.*

The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island. The prediction imports, that wild beasts of different kinds would meet in Idumea. Of all the wonderful circumstances attached to the history, or pertaining to the fate of Edom, there is one which is not to be ranked among the least in singularity, that bears no remote application to the prefixed prophecy, and that ought not, perhaps, to pass here unnoted. It is recorded in an ancient chronicle, that the Emperor Decius caused fierce lions and lionesses to be transported from [the deserts of] Africa to the borders of Palestine and Arabia, in order that, propagating there, they might act as an annoyance and a barrier to the barbarous Saracens.¹ Between Arabia and Palestine lies the doomed and execrated land of Edom. And to this day, those who ought to be most versant of this

¹ Ο αὐτός Δεικίος βασιλεὺς ἤγαγεν ἀπὸ τῆς Αἰθιοπίας λέοντας φοβερούς καὶ λεαίνας, καὶ ἀπέλυσεν εἰς τὸ λιμνὸν ἀνατολῆς ἀπὸ Ἀραβίας καὶ Παλαιστίνης ἕως τοῦ Κερκισίου Καστροῦ, πρὸς τὸ ποιῆσαι γένεαν διὰ τοὺς Βαρβάρους Σαρακηνούς. (Chronicon Alexandrinum, ad. an. C. 358. Relandi Palestina, p. 97.)

fact, testify that the wild beasts of the desert are to be found in Edom. The sheikh and his brother who accompanied Mr Cory, assured him that both lions and leopards are often seen in Petra, and hills immediately beyond it, but that they never descend into the plain beneath. Mr Cory was of opinion that by leopards they meant ounces, "but the lion, from their description, could not be mistaken." More definite evidence may now be adduced. "The *wild goat* and the *wild boar*, we were informed," says Dr Wilson, "are to be found in the locality. The other mammalia of the place (Petra) and the neighbourhood, according to the Fellahin, besides the *hedgehog* and *porcupine*, above alluded to, are the *fox*, *wolf*, *jackal*, *hyena*, *lynx*, *leopard*, hare, weebur, or coney, jerboa, &c. We were told that the lion is found in Wadi Hamad."¹ The names of the wild beasts which, without putting any leading question, we obtained at Petra, as known there, and frequenting its vicinity, were the wild boar, fox, leopard, jackal, wild cat, and wolf. *The wild beasts of the desert meet there with the wild beasts of the island.*

The satyr shall cry to his fellow. The satyr is entirely a fabulous animal. The word (soir) literally means a *rough hairy one*: and, like a synonymous word in both the Greek and Latin languages which has the same signification, has been translated both by lexicographers and commentators, *the goat*.² Parkhurst says, that, in this sense, he would understand this very passage: and Lowth distinctly asserts, without assigning to it any other meaning, that "the word originally signifies *goat*."³ Such respectable and well-known

¹ Lands of the Bible, vol. ii. p. 379.

² "So the Greek *παγος*, a he-goat, is from *παχυς*, rough, on account of the roughness of his hair, and the Latin *hircus*, a he-goat, for *hirtus*, rough." (Parkhurst's Lexicon.)

³ Lowth assigns the reason why the word is translated *satyr*; it is supposed that evil spirits of old time appeared in the shape of goats, as the learned Bochart has proved. (Isa. xiii. 21.)

authorities have been cited, because their decision must have rested on criticism alone, as it was impossible that their minds could have been biassed by any knowledge of the fact in reference to Edom. It was their province, and that of others, to illustrate its meaning: it was Burckhardt's, however unconsciously, to bear, from ocular observation, witness to its truth. "In all the wadys south of the Modjel and El Asha," (pointing to Edom,) "large herds of mountain-goats are met with. They pasture in flocks of forty and fifty together."¹ *They dwell there.*

The only other animals specified in prophecy are, according to the English translation, the cormorant and the bittern,—in the original, the kaath (קֶאֶת), and the kippod (קִפּוֹד). The similarity of the name with that of the *katta*, mentioned by Burckhardt as abounding in immense numbers in *Shera* (Mount Seir), as in other districts of Syria, induced the writer from the first to believe that it was identical with the *kaath*, which is sometimes written *kata*.² The opinion was embraced by several learned writers; but has been recently controverted, as it is said that "the Arabic and Hebrew names do not agree." Nothing of questionable accuracy can stand as evidence. And of this animal, be what it may, it may yet be said, as but lately of all, "Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read; no one of these shall fail." While in Petra the author of these pages noted the names of the birds from the native Arabs, whenever he heard any of them crying to its mate, as the bird was seen, and the cry clearly distinguished from the others. Once, but only once, while an Arab of the country was with him, on thus asking the name of a bird as its single cry was heard, the answer at once was, the *kaat*, as the original Hebrew word is usually pronounced. He listened attentively to catch the sound a second time, but in vain. And

¹ Burckhardt's Travels in Syria.

² Onkel. Simon. Lex. p. 1393.

this only can he say, that the cry of the *kaat* may be heard among the cliffs of Petra. The subject is yet open to farther inquiry.

The *kifud* seems to identify itself with the kippod, (porcupine or hedgehog) which we were told by the Fellahin, as was also Dr Wilson, is found in the neighbouring valleys, though not in Petra. The place *divided unto* these various animals, is not any special spot, but the land of Idumea. But if they be in Petra, its capital, though not exclusively there, or in any other portion of the land, they are *found* within it.

But the evidence respecting all the animals specified in the prophecy, as the future possessors of Edom, may not be yet complete. And the command still stands, for those of future generations no less than of the present, *Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read; no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate.—He hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line: they shall possess it for ever, from generation to generation shall they dwell therein.* Yet recent as the disclosure of any information respecting them has been,—and offered, as in this treatise it has been for the first time, for the consideration of every candid mind, the positive terms and singleness of object of the prophecies themselves, and the undesigned and decisive evidence first given to the facts, are surely enough to show how greatly these several specific predictions and their respective facts exceed all possibility of their being the word or the work of man, and how clearly there may be discovered in them all, if sight itself be conviction, the credentials of inspiration, and the operation of His hands, to whose prescience futurity is open,—to whose power all nature is subservient,—and “whose mouth it hath commanded, and whose Spirit it hath gathered them.”

Noted as Edom was for its terribleness, and possessed of a

capital city, from which even a feeble people could not easily have been dislodged, there scarcely could have been a question, even among its enemies, to what *people* that country would eventually belong. And it never could have been thought of by any natives of another land, as the Jewish prophets were, nor by any uninspired mortal whatever, that a kingdom, which had previously subsisted so long, (and in which princes ceased not to reign, commerce to flourish, and “a people of great opulence” to dwell for more than six hundred years thereafter,) would be finally extinct, that all its cities would be for ever desolate, and, though it could have boasted, more than any other land, of indestructible habitations for men, that their *habitations* would be *desolate*; and that certain *wild animals*, mentioned by name, would possess the country from generation to generation.

*There shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau. Edom shall be cut off for ever.*¹ The aliens of Judah ever look with wistful eyes to the land of their fathers; but no Edomite is now to be found to dispute the right of any animal to the possession of it, or to banish the owls from the temples and tombs of Edom. But the house of Esau did remain, and existed in great power; till after the commencement of the Christian era, a period far too remote from the date of the prediction for their subsequent history to have been foreseen by man. The Idumeans were soon after mingled with the Nabatheans.² And in the third century, their language was disused, and their very name, as designating any people, had utterly perished; and their country itself having become an outcast from Syria, among whose kingdoms it had long been numbered, was united to Arabia Petræa. Though the descendants of the twin-born Esau and Jacob have met a diametrically opposite fate, the fact is no less marvellous

¹ Obad. 10, 18.

² Origen, lib. iii. in Job.

and undisputed, than the prediction in each case is alike obvious and true. While the posterity of Jacob have been "dispersed in every country under heaven," and are "scattered among all nations," and have ever remained distinct from them all, and while it is also declared that "a full end will never be made of them;" the Edomites, though they existed as a nation for more than seventeen hundred years, *have*, as a period of nearly equal duration has proved, *been cut off for ever*; and while Jews are in every land, *there is not any remaining*, so far as known, on any spot on earth, *of the house of Esau*.

Idumea, in aid of a neighbouring state, did send forth on a sudden, an army of twenty thousand armed men,—it contained many towns and villages long after the Christian era, —successive kings and princes reigned in Petra,—and magnificent tombs and temples, whose empty chambers and naked walls of wonderful architecture still strike the traveller with amazement, were constructed there, at a period unquestionably far remote from the time when it was given to the prophets of Israel to tell, that the house of Esau was to be cut off for ever, that there would be no kingdom there, and that wild animals would possess Edom for a heritage. And so despised is Edom, and the memory of its greatness lost, that there is no record of antiquity that can so clearly show us what once it was, in the days of its power, as we can now read in the page of prophecy, its existing desolation. But in that place where kings kept their court, and where nobles assembled, where manifest proofs of ancient opulence are concentrated, where princely mausoleums and temples retaining their external grandeur, but bereft of all their splendour, still look as if "fresh from the chisel,"—even there no man dwells, it is given by lot to birds, and beasts, and reptiles; it is a "court for owls," and scarcely are they ever frayed from "their lonely habi-

tation" by the tread of a solitary traveller from a far distant land, among deserted dwellings and desolated ruins.

Hidden as the history and state of Edom have been for ages, every recent disclosure, being an echo of the prophecies, amply corroborates the truth, that the word of the Lord does not return unto him void, but ever fulfils the purpose for which he hath sent it. But the whole of its work is not yet wrought in Edom, which has farther testimony in store; and while the evidence is not yet complete, so neither is the time of the final judgments on the land yet fully come. Judea, Ammon, and Moab, according to the word of prophecy, shall revive from their desolation, and the wild animals who have conjoined their depredations with those of barbarous men, in perpetuating the desolation of these countries, shall find a refuge and undisturbed possession in Edom, when the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion being past, it shall be divided unto them by line, when they shall possess it for ever, and from generation to generation shall dwell therein. But without looking into futurity, a retrospect may here warrant, before leaving the subject, a concluding clause.

That man is a bold *believer*, and must with whatever reluctance, forego the name of *sceptic*, who possesses such redundant credulity as to think, that all the predictions respecting Edom, and all others recorded in Scripture, and realized by facts, were the mere hap-hazard results of fortuitous conjectures. And he who thus, without reflecting how incongruous it is to "strain at a gnat and swallow a camel," can deliberately, and with an unruffled mind, place such an opinion among the articles of his faith, may indeed be pitied by those who know in whom they have believed, but, if he forfeit not thereby all right of ever appealing to reason, must at least renounce all title to stigmatize, in others, even the most preposterous belief. Or if such, after

all, must needs be his philosophical creed, and his rational conviction! what can hinder him from believing also that other chance words—such as truly marked the fate of Edom, but more numerous and clear, and which, were he to “seek out and read,” he would find in the self-same “book of the Lord,”—may also prove equally true to the spirit, if not to the letter, against all the enemies of the gospel, whether hypocrites or unbelievers? May not his belief in the latter instance be strengthened by the *experience* that many averments of Scripture, in respect to times then future, and to facts then unknown, have already proved true? And may he not here find some analogy, at least, on which to rest his faith, whereas the conviction which in the former case he so readily cherishes, is totally destitute of any semblance whatever to warrant the possibility of its truth? Or is this indeed the sum of his boasted wisdom, to hold to the conviction of the fallacy of all the coming judgments denounced in Scripture till “experience,” personal though it should be, prove them to be as true as the past, and a compulsory and unchangeable but unredeeming faith be grafted on despair? Or if less proof can possibly suffice, let him timely read and examine, and disprove also, all the credentials of revelation, before he account the believer credulous, or the unbeliever wise; or else let him abandon the thought that the unrepentant iniquity and wilful perversity of man, and an evil heart of unbelief (all proof derided, all offered mercy rejected, all meetness for an inheritance among them that are sanctified unattained, and all warning lost,) shall not finally forbid that Edom stand alone, the seared and blasted monument of the judgments of Heaven.

A word may here be spoken even to the wise. Were any of the sons of men to be uninstructed in the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom, and in the knowledge of his word, which maketh wise unto salvation,

and to be thus ignorant of the truths and precepts of the gospel, which should all tell upon every deed done in the body; what in such a case, if all their superior knowledge were unaccompanied by religious principles, would all mechanical and physical science eventually prove, but the same, in kind, as the wisdom of the wise men of Edom? And were they to perfect in astronomy, navigation, and mechanics, what, according to Sir Isaac Newton, the Edomites began, what would the moulding of matter to their will avail them, as moral and accountable beings, if their own hearts were not conformed to the Divine will; and what would all their labour be at last, but strength spent for nought? For were they to raise column above column, and again to hew a city out of the cliffs of the rock, let but such another word of that God, whom they seek not to know, go forth against it, and all their mechanical ingenuity and labour would just end in forming—that which Petra is, and which Rome itself is destined to be—“a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.” The experiment has already been made; it may well and wisely be trusted to as much as those which mortals make; and it is set before us that, instead of provoking the Lord to far worse than its repetition in personal judgments against ourselves, we may be warned by the spirit of prophecy, which is the testimony of Jesus, to hear and obey the words of Him—*even of Jesus, who delivereth from the wrath to come.* For how much greater than any degradation to which hewn but unfeeling rocks can be reduced, is that of a soul, which while in the body might have been formed anew after the image of an all-holy God, and made meet for beholding his face in glory,—passing from spiritual darkness into a spiritual state where all knowledge of earthly things shall cease to be power,—where all the riches of this world shall cease to be gain,—where the want of religious principles and of

Christian virtues shall leave the soul naked, as the bare and empty dwellings in the clefts of the rocks—where the thoughts of worldly wisdom, to which it was inured before, shall haunt it still, and be more unworthy and hateful occupants of the immortal spirit, than are the *owls* amid the palaces of Edom—and where all those sinful passions, which rested on the things which were seen shall be like unto the *dragons* which have Edom for their *habitation*,—when *dust shall be the serpent's meat* ; and he that is *unjust* shall be *unjust still*, and he that is *filthy*, shall be *filthy still* ; and he that is *righteous* shall be *righteous still* ; and he that is *holy* shall be *holy still*.

But, in very faithfulness, there may well be here a word for professing believers, as well as for avowed sceptics. It is near at hand, and not afar off, when Edom is the theme. Let it not be man's but the Lord's. “ *Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the Lord of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever. And your eyes shall see, and ye shall say, The Lord will be magnified from the border of Israel. A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name? Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the Lord is contemptible. And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the Lord of hosts, &c. From the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of*

*the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts."*¹

NOTE.

Only of recent years have the minds of men been turned towards Edom; and after the lapse of many ages, European travellers have visited it again. It now stands forth as a witness for the Holy One of Israel. But its testimony is not yet exhausted. Forgotten and despised as it long has been—it may be that now at last it has attracted the attention of the world—that the *nations* may be prepared to hear the Divine invocation to them, to regard what has there yet to be done, or to the judgments of which even desolate Edom shall be the appointed place—in the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion—after which the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.² The word of the Lord is that of the Eternal, with whom one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. Three thousand three hundred years have passed away since the first predictions, in which Mount Seir was included, or Edom was involved, that have respect to times yet future, were recorded or uttered by Moses, or by Balaam. "*I will set thy bounds from the Red Sea even unto the sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto the river.*"³ He took up his parable and said—I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. *And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do valiantly. Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, &c.*"⁴ Later prophets also testified,—“In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: *that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen which are called by my name, saith the Lord that doeth this.*"⁵ “But upon Mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions.—

¹ Malachi i. 4-8, 11.⁴ Numbers xxiv. 15-19.² Isaiah xxxv. 1.⁵ Amos ix. 11, 12.³ Exod. xxiii. 31.

And they of the south shall possess the Mount of Esau, and they of the plain the Philistines, &c.—And saviours shall come up on Mount Zion to judge the Mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the Lord's."¹ "Thus saith the Lord God, When the whole earth rejoiceth, I will make thee desolate."²

These predictions speak unequivocally,—if read literally, as others have been literally fulfilled,—of a time yet future, and of things that are yet to come to pass. *The vision, like many others, is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it: because it will surely come, it will not tarry. Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.*"³ Let it here suffice to say, that desolate as Edom is, the desolation of desolations, according to the Hebrew idiom, or the most desolate of all these deserted lands—alone bare as the Lord has made it, while withered herbs, or briars, thorns, and thistles, or else luxuriant pasturage, everywhere cover the desolated lands of Israel, Ammon, and Moab,—there still are signs to show that there may be a remnant of Edom capable of being the possession of the people for whom it is destined by the Lord. Though, in the words of Burckhardt, all the country between Maan and Akaba, as well as between Maan and the plains of the Hauran, may with great propriety be called a stony desert, it is yet *susceptible of culture*, and in many places overgrown with wild herbs, as many traces of towns and villages show that it must once have been thickly inhabited. The valley of Ghoeir, a large rocky and uneven basin, which divides on the north the district of Djebal, or Gabalene, from that of Djebal Shera, or Mount Seir, is famous for excellent pasturage, produced by its numerous springs, and has become in consequence a favourite place of encampment for all the Bedouins of Djebal and Shera.⁴ Shobak, "the principal place in Djebal Shera," where about a hundred Arab families had built their houses, or pitched their tents, in an old castle of Saracenic construction, is (A.D. 1812) surrounded by gardens and olive plantations.⁵ Though "Maan (Teman) is situated in the midst of a rocky country not capable of cultivation," yet "the pomegranates, apricots, and peaches of Maan are of the finest quality." The slopes of the mountain near the village of Eldjy, are formed into artificial terraces, which, when visited by Burckhardt, were covered with corn-fields and plantations of fruit-trees, though less fruitful, when seen by more recent travellers. "The Refaya Bedouins—who

¹ Obadiah 17, 19, 21.

² Ezek. xxxv. 14.

³ Hab. ii. 3, 4.

⁴ Burckhardt, pp. 110, 114.

⁵ Ibid. p. 416.

have the reputation," says Burckhardt, "of being very daring thieves, and the Arabs Saoudyne, in Mount Seir, are Fellahin, or cultivators. The former, who had about sixty tents, the latter twice as many, had corn-fields and vineyards, and dried large quantities of grapes." Most desolate as Edom is—though not now a tenth nor a hundredth part of what it was—there may yet—susceptible of culture as it partly is,—be a larger *remnant* at last for a *possession* to the seed of Jacob.

Bozrah is a name which, as well as Selah, has its place in unfulfilled as well as in accomplished prophecies. Some have supposed it to be Bozrah of the Hauran; but the lands both of Moab and Ammon lay between that city and Mount Seir. The Bozrah of Edom seems, with incomparably greater propriety, to be identified with *Beszezyra*, of which the ruins show that it was, "in ancient times, a considerable city."¹ Of late years a tower was built there by the Arabs Howeytat; after the erection of which the inhabitants of Omeda, now a ruined village, three or four hours to the north of it, removed to *Beszezyra*, which was a village of about fifty houses, when visited by Burckhardt. It thus exists—or existed—again as an inhabited place. And mean as it may seem, it is still said of Bozrah in the book of the Lord, in reference to the *treading of the wine press*, the day of vengeance, *the year of his redeemed*, "Who is this that cometh from *Edom*, with dyed garments from *Bozrah*? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his might? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save."—The day will declare it. But, as thus it is written, though not thus alone,—the time may not yet be past in which men shall say, *The Lord will be magnified from the border of Israel*. But the illustration of such prophecies pertains to another theme, as they point to another time.

¹ Burckhardt, p. 407.

CHAPTER IX.

PHILISTIA.

THE land of the Philistines bordered on the west and south-west of Judea, and lies on the south-east of the Mediterranean Sea. It lay within the allotted borders of the tribe of Judah, *Ekron, with her towns and villages: from Ekron even unto the sea, all that lay near Ashdod, with their villages: Ashdod with her towns and her villages, Gaza with her towns and her villages, unto the river of Egypt, and the great sea, and the border thereof.*¹ When Joshua was old and stricken in years, *all the borders of the Philistines* were included in the *very much land that remained to be possessed,—five lords of the Philistines; the Gazathites, and the Ashdothites, the Eshkalonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites.*² After the days of Joshua and of the elders that outlived him, when the tribes of Israel forsook the Lord God of their fathers, all these were numbered among their enemies that were left to try the Israelites, and to be thorns and scourges in their sides, until they should perish from off the good land which the Lord their God had given them. That such the Philistines were age after age, the Scriptural history of Israel amply shows.

The land of the Philistines retains to this day its *natural* fertility as in ancient times. Nowhere through Syria is the land more rich, the soil more deep, or finer gleanings left, than in the land of Philistia, north of Gaza. Long after the Christian era it possessed a very numerous population,

¹ Josh. xv. 45-47.² Josh. xiii. 1-3.

and strongly-fortified cities; and in the comparatively recent period of the twelfth century, Ashkelon was one of the strongest fortresses of Syria, the last that the Crusaders took, as it long resisted all their hosts. No human probability could possibly have existed in the days of the prophets, or at a far later age, of its eventual desolation. But as now explored, long after the days of its grandeur and glory are gone, it belies every promise which the fertility of the soil, and the excellence of its climate gave, for many preceding centuries, of its permanency as a rich and well-cultivated region. *The gods of the Philistines* that led Israel astray are forgotten: they have all fallen, as did Dagon before the ark of the Lord. But the land where their worship was established, responds to the word of the only living and true God, and takes its appointed place among the witnesses that testify how He *only* is the Lord, who was, and is, and shall be, the God of Israel. It harboured for century after century the enemies of the people whom He chose as his own; but the voice of prophecy, which was not silent respecting it, proclaimed the fate that awaited it, in terms as contradictory, at the time, to every natural suggestion, as they are descriptive of what Philistia now actually is—and *whose* it yet shall be.

*Thus saith the Lord God, Because the Philistines have dealt by revenge, and have taken vengeance with a despiteful heart, to destroy it for the old hatred; therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will stretch out mine hand upon the Philistines, and I will cut off the Cherethims, and destroy the remnant of the sea-coast. And I will execute great vengeance upon them with furious rebukes; and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall lay my vengeance upon them.*¹—*The Lord will spoil the Philistines, the remnant of the country of Caphtor. Baldness is come*

¹ Ezek. xxv. 15-17.

upon Gaza; Ashkelon is cut off with the remnant of their valley: how long wilt thou cut thyself? O thou sword of the Lord, how long will it be ere thou be quiet? Put up thyself into thy scabbard, rest, and be still. How can it be quiet, seeing that the Lord hath given it a charge against Ashkelon, and against the sea-shore? there hath he appointed it.¹ Thus saith the Lord, For three transgressions of Gaza, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof.—I will send a fire on the wall of Gaza, which shall devour the palaces thereof: and I will cut off the inhabitant from Ashdod, and him that holdeth the sceptre from Ashkelon; and I will turn mine hand against Ekron; and the remnant of the Philistines shall perish, saith the Lord God.² For Gaza shall be forsaken, and Ashkelon a desolation: they shall drive out Ashdod at the noon-day, and Ekron shall be rooted up. Woe unto the inhabitants of the sea-coast, the nation of the Cherethites! the word of the Lord is against you; O Canaan, the land of the Philistines, I will even destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant. And the sea-coast shall be dwellings and cottages for shepherds, and folds for flocks. And the coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah; they shall feed thereupon: in the houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down in the evening; for the Lord their God shall visit them, and turn away their captivity.³—The king shall perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited. And a bastard shall dwell in Ashdod; and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines. And I will take away his blood out of his mouth, and his abominations from between his teeth: but he that remaineth, even he, shall be for our God; and he shall be as a governor in Judah, and Ekron as a Jebusite. And I will encamp about mine house because of the army, because of him that passeth by, and because

¹ Jer. xlviii. 4-7.² Amos i. 6, 7, 8.³ Zeph. ii. 4-7.

*of him that returneth; and no oppressor shall pass through them any more: for now have I seen with mine eyes.*¹

These are the words of the *eternal Spirit*, by whose inspiration all Scripture was given; and they have thus respect to the future—as still it is—even as they tell of the past and depict the present. Volney may continue, as in all former editions, to be the leading witness; and the daguerreo-type may complete the proof.

The land of the Philistines was to be destroyed. It partakes of the general desolation common to it with Judea and other neighbouring states. But its aspect presents some existing peculiarities, which travellers fail not to particularize, and which, in reference both to the state of the country, and the fate of its different cities, the prophets failed not to discriminate as justly as if their description had been drawn both with all the accuracy which ocular observation, and all the certainty which authenticated history could give. And the authority, so often quoted, may here again be appealed to. Volney (though, like one who in ancient times was instrumental to the fulfilment of a special prediction, “he meant not so, neither did his heart think so,”) from the manner in which he generalizes his observations, and marks the peculiar features of the different districts of Syria, with greater acuteness and perspicuity than any other traveller whatever, is the ever-ready purveyor of evidence in all the cases which came within the range of his topographical description of the wide field of prophecy; while, at the same time, from his known, open, and zealous hostility to the Christian cause, his testimony is alike decisive and unquestionable; and the vindication of the truth of the following predictions may safely be committed to this redoubted champion of infidelity.

The sea-coast shall be dwellings and cottages for shep-

¹ Zech. ix. 5-8.

herds, and folds for flocks. The remnant of the Philistines shall perish. Baldness is come upon Gaza; it shall be forsaken. The king shall perish from Gaza. Ashkelon shall be a desolation; it shall be cut off with the remnant of their valley; it shall not be inhabited. “In the plain between Ramla and Gaza,” (the very plain of the Philistines along the sea-coast) “we met with a number of villages, badly built of dried mud, and which, like the inhabitants, exhibit every mark of poverty and wretchedness. The houses, on a nearer view, are only so many huts (cottages) sometimes detached, at others ranged in the form of cells, around a court-yard, enclosed by a mud wall. In winter, they and their cattle may be said to live together, the part of the dwelling allotted to themselves being only raised two feet above that in which they lodge their beasts—(*dwellings and cottages for shepherds, and folds for flocks.*) Except the environs of these villages, *all the rest of the country is a desert*, and abandoned to the Bedouin Arabs, who feed their flocks on it.”¹ *The remnant shall perish: the land of the Philistines shall be destroyed that there shall be no inhabitant, and the sea-coast shall be dwellings and cottages for shepherds, and folds for flocks.*

“The ruins of white marble sometimes found at Gaza, prove that it was formerly the abode of luxury and opulence. It has shared in the general destruction; and, notwithstanding its proud title of the capital of Palestine, it is now no more than a defenceless village,” (*baldness has come upon it*), “peopled by, at most, only two thousand inhabitants.”² *It is forsaken and bereaved of its king.* “The sea-coast, by which it was formerly washed, is every day removing farther from the *deserted ruins* of Ashkelon.”³ *It shall be a desolation. Ashkelon shall not be inhabited.* “Amidst the various *ruins*, those of Ezdoud (Ashdod,) so powerful

¹ Volney's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 335, 336.

² Ibid. p. 340.

³ Ibid. p. 338.

under the Philistines, are now remarkable for their scorpions."¹

Although the Christian traveller must yield the palm to Volney,² as the topographer of prophecy, and although supplementary evidence be not requisite, yet a place is here willingly given to the following just observations.

"Ashkelon was one of the proudest satrapies of the lords of the Philistines; now there is not an inhabitant within its walls; and the prophecy of Zechariah is fulfilled. The king shall perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited. When the prophecy was uttered, both cities were in an equally flourishing condition; and nothing but the prescience of Heaven could pronounce on which of the two, and in what manner the vial of its wrath should be poured out. Gaza is truly without a king. The lofty towers of Ashkelon lie scattered on the ground, and the ruins within its walls do not shelter a human being. How is the wrath of man made to praise his Creator! Hath he said, and shall he not do it? The oracle was delivered by the mouth of the prophet more than five hundred years before the Christian era, and we behold its accomplishment eighteen hundred years after that event."³

Cogent and just as the reasoning is, the facts stated by Volney give wider scope for an irresistible argument. The fate of one city is not only distinguished from that of another; but the varied aspect of the country itself, the

¹ Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 333.

² Had Volney been a believer; had he "sought out of the book of the Lord and read;" and had he applied all the facts which he knew in illustration of the prophecies, how completely would he have proved their inspiration! But it is well for the cause of truth that such a witness was himself an unbeliever; for his evidence, in many an instance, comes so very close to the predictions, that his testimony in the relation of positive facts would have been utterly discredited, and held as purposely adapted to the very words of prophecy, by those who otherwise lent a greedy ear to his utterance of some of the wildest fancies and most gross untruths that ever emanated from the mind of man, or ever entered into a deceitful heart. He who so artfully could pervert the truth, falls the victim of facts stated by himself.

³ Richardson's Travels, vol. ii. p. 204.

dwellings and cottages for shepherds in one part, and that very region named, the rest of the land destroyed and uninhabited, a desert, and abandoned to the flocks of the wandering Arabs ; Gaza, bereaved of a king, a defenceless village, destitute of all its fortifications, Ashkelon, a desolation, and without an inhabitant—form in each instance a specific prediction, and a recorded fact, and present such a view of the existing state of Philistia, as might render it difficult to determine, from the strictest accordance that prevails between both, whether the inspired penman, or the defamer of Scripture, gives the more vivid description. Nor is there any obscurity whatever, in any one of the circumstances, or in any part of the proof. The coincidence is too glaring, even for wilful blindness not to discern ; and to all, the least versed in general history, the priority of the predictions to the events is equally obvious. And such was the natural fertility of the country, and such was the strength and celebrity of the cities, that no conjecture possessing the least shadow of plausibility can be formed in what manner any of these events could possibly have been thought of, even for many centuries after “the vision and prophecy” were sealed. After that period, Gaza defied the power of Alexander the Great, and withstood for two months a hard-pressed siege. The army, with which he soon afterwards overthrew the Persian empire, having there, as well as at Tyre, been checked or delayed in the first flush of conquest, and he himself having been twice wounded in desperate attempts to storm the city, the proud and enraged king of Macedon, with all the cruelty of a brutish heart, and boasting of himself as a second Achilles, dragged at his chariot-wheels the intrepid general who had defended it, twice around the walls of Gaza.¹ Ashkelon was no less celebrated for the excellence of its wines, than for the strength of its fortifica-

¹ Quintus Curtius, lib. iv. cap. xxvi.

tions.¹ And of Ashdod, it is related by an eminent ancient historian, not only that it was a great city, but that it withstood the longest siege recorded in history, (it may almost be said, either of prior or of later date,) having been besieged for the space of twenty-nine years by Psammetticus, king of Egypt.² Strabo, after the commencement of the Christian era, classes its citizens among the chief inhabitants of Syria. Each of these cities, Gaza, Ashkelon, and Ashdod, was the see of a bishop, from the days of Constantine to the invasion of the Saracens. And, as a decisive proof of their existence as cities, long subsequent to the delivery of the predictions, it may further be remarked, that different coins of each of these very cities are extant, and are copied and described in several accounts of ancient coins.³ The once princely magnificence of Gaza is still attested by the "ruins of white marble;" and the house of the present Aga is composed of fragments of ancient columns, cornices, &c.; and in the court-yard, and immured in the wall, are shafts and capitals of granite columns.⁴

In short, *cottages for shepherds, and folds for flocks*, partially scattered along the *sea-coasts*, are now truly the best substitutes for populous cities, that the once powerful realm of Philistia can produce; and the *remnant* of that land, which gave titles and grandeur to the lords of the Philistines, *is destroyed*. Gaza, the chief of its satrapies, "the abode of luxury and opulence," now *bereaved of its king, and bald* of all its fortifications, is the defenceless residence of a subsidiary ruler of a devastated province; and, in kindred degradation, ornaments of its once splendid edifices are now bedded in a wall that forms an enclosure for beasts. A handful of men could now take unobstructed possession of that place, where a strong city opposed the

¹ Relandi *Palæstina*, pp. 341, 586.

² Relandi *Palæst.* pp. 595, 609, 797.

³ Herodot. Hist. lib. ii. cap. clvii.

⁴ General Straton's MS.

entrance and defied for a time the power of the conqueror of the world. The walls, the dwellings, and the people of *Ashkelon* have all perished; and though its name was, in the time of the Crusades, shouted in triumph throughout every land in Europe, it is now literally *without an inhabitant*. And the ancient Ashdod, which withstood a siege treble the duration of that of Troy, and thus outrivalled far the boast of Alexander at Gaza, has, in verification of "the word of God, which is sharper than any two-edged sword," been *cut off*, and its ruins, or ruined site, in the days of Volney, were famous only for their scorpions.

The wonderful contrast in each particular, whether in respect to the land, or to the cities of the Philistines, is the exact counterpart of the literal prediction; and, having the testimony of Volney to all the facts, and also indisputable evidence of the great priority of the predictions to the events, what more complete or clearer proof could there be, that each and all of these predictions emanated from the prescience of Heaven? And yet, though previously unthought of by the writer, a more complete proof may be given.

A more precise statement may show how wonderful these predictions are.

Set down by *name*, tenantless as it is, it was long otherwise with Ashkelon than with *many* of the unnamed cities of the land of Israel, of which we never read that they withstood a foe, after the Romans *besieged* the Jews *in all their gates*. A reiterated account need not here be given of the beauty as well as the strength of that celebrated fortress, or of the most famous of its sieges, when it long resisted and repelled the power of the combined hosts of the Crusaders by sea and land, and yielded at last on "honourable" terms, when the consuming flames—of which the fuel was laid by the besieged for the destruction of a fort raised

against it—made a breach in the wall which proved the death-bed of the assailing Templars. Dismantled and renewed again and again, in the days of Saladin of Egypt and Richard of England, “its fortifications were at length utterly destroyed by Sultan Bibars in the year 1270.”¹ But it continued to harbour a Turkish garrison till the beginning of the seventeenth century. The “deserted ruins” lay undisturbed till Ibrahim Pasha caused a portion of them to be raised for the construction of large barracks in the vicinity, for his army of Syria. The work was stopped when all was ready for its completion. But the space thus cleared was converted into gardens by the inhabitants of a neighbouring village. Upwards of twenty fountains of excellent water, before buried under ruins, were opened up anew; irrigated from which many verdant spots,—formed into gardens, fenced and terraced with stones of houses in which Ascalonites, long of a formidable name, did dwell,—have sprung up among the ruins, intermixed with which were patches of wheat, barley, pulse, tobacco, while fig-trees,—which, as seen in the plate, had not then in early spring put forth their leaves—olives, almonds, and pomegranates, are not wanting where not a man of Ashkelon remains. It has been wholly *uninhabited* beyond the memory of man; and the fortress, for which many kings have contended, is now the defenceless property of the miserable villagers of El-Jura, whom we saw cowering within their own mud huts at the sight of Bedouins. They have never known an inhabitant within the walls of Ashkelon; and when questioned as to the fact, one of them, an aged man, strangely asked the writer, when there last were any. Rival caliphs of Egypt and of Bagdad, and kings from the ends of the earth, have contended for its possession, have conquered and have lost it, while some, like Baldwin II.,

¹ See *Land of Israel*, pp. 229, 231, 270, 373–378.



have besieged it in vain. But when all evanescent conquests are over, the word of the Lord maintains its triumph, and it has still another to achieve. The view is taken from the interior, long crowded with inhabitants; and some of the ruined walls beside the eastern gate are seen, from which fierce combatants issued forth, while proud defiance was often shouted from the walls. Ashkelon, too, has its *sanctuaries that are desolate*, and a lesser and larger church have been disclosed to view, when robbed of the stones that covered their ruins. One of them is about 140 feet in length, and 80 in breadth; and broken pedestals, capitals, and shafts of columns, show that the church was elegant as well as spacious, and seem to tell that *there* once stood the cathedral of Ascalon. Now the bloody warriors and apostate worshippers are gone. Towers and temples alike are desolate. But within the few past years, open fountains that before were closed, and verdant spots, yielding their produce to peaceful labour, where thorns, and thistles, and wild herbs every where covered—as they still largely do—the fallen houses of the proud Ascalonites, have not yet reversed its only temporary doom; but, like the first appearance of a bud on a bare fig-tree, like that which the plate exhibits, they may seem in the visions of hope to show that were all things else ready, so also are they, for the time when words of righteous judgment shall give place to those of promised mercy, and Ashkelon, which at the first lay within the borders of the tribe of Judah, shall be built again—not for barracks for Egyptian soldiers—but with *houses in which the remnant of Judah, returned again, shall lie down in the evening*. But to this day the word stands true, *Ashkelon shall not be inhabited*. Whether desolate, as before, or partially cultivated, as of late, the old man and others said, they had never known an *inhabitant* within it; though immediately *without* its walls, there are,

of recent construction, two or three small houses for watch-towers *during the vintage*, where vines, on the outside, adorn the else useless wall of Ashkelon, even as *vines* shall cover the long desolate land, when fortresses shall cease for ever. *Ashkelon is cut off with the remnant of their valley.*

While the ancient capital of Ammon is to this day a stable for camels and a couching-place for flocks, and Arabs there fearlessly occupy it, the reason is assigned by Mr Cyril Graham in the following note communicated by him to the author, why Ashkelon is not inhabited even by Arabs in its immediate vicinity:—"Ashkelon itself—that is, the site of the ancient city within the walls—is not inhabited, although no spot on that coast could be more eligible. The soil is good, and the peasants who cultivate it get a great number of excellent fruits of many different kinds. But what is most striking is, that immediately *without* the city a small village of mud huts exists, inhabited by miserable Fellahîn. When they were asked why they lived outside the walls, where they were exposed to all the wind and storms of sand, when they might be altogether sheltered inside the ancient town, they answered that they did not know; they feared the Jân [Genii] and the Ghûl [spirits] in the town, and no one dared live there. The fact of there being actually an inhabited place just outside Ashkelon, gives greater force to the fulfilment of the prophecy, "Ashkelon shall not be inhabited."

How long wilt thou cut thyself? O thou sword of the Lord, how long will it be ere thou be quiet? Put up thyself into thy scabbard, rest, and be still. How can it be quiet? seeing the Lord hath given it a charge against Ashkelon, and against the sea-shore, there hath he appointed it. How long will it be ere the sword be quiet, and be put in the scabbard, and rest, and be still? History cannot yet answer the prophetic question, which the book of the Lord, else-

where, can alone resolve. But it can fully and clearly tell, that against Ashkelon and against the sea-shore, the Lord, in times now past, did in truth *appoint it*. From the days of the prophets to the present time, the sea-shore of Philistia has often been the battle-field of successive combatants.

In the twelfth century, or about two thousand years after this prophecy of Amos, the *sea-shore* of Philistia was the scene of some of the fiercest battles of the Crusaders. *There* Saladin and his armies were alternately the conquerors and the conquered. *There*, near to *Ashkelon*, the Franks defeated the Moslems with a terrible slaughter; and "pursuing their vanquished foes," says the chief historian of these wars, "for twelve miles there did not cease to be a continued slaughter of the enemy."¹ *There*, too, the last battles of the Crusades were fought, *on the sea-coast where the Lord had appointed the sword*. In the words of Gibbon, "After the surrender of Acre, and the departure of Philip (king of France,) the king of England led the Crusaders to the recovery of the *sea-coast*;—a march of one hundred miles, from Acre to *Ascalon* was a great and perpetual battle of *eleven days*."² *There* the sword is not yet put up in its scabbard. From the ruins of Ashkelon the writer saw seven thousand Bedouins—sons of Ishmael, whose hand is against every man, and every man's hand against them—as they were returning from a battle fought with a hostile tribe on the sea-coast of Philistia.

Of the truth of the prophecies concerning tenantless Ashkelon there cannot be a doubt: but a question may arise whether *baldness*, in the full meaning of the word, has come upon Gaza, the only remaining town in Philistia, or whether that city, however fallen from its former greatness, can strictly be said to be *forsaken* if peopled, like the modern

¹ Hist. Will. Tyr. p. 1010.

² Gibbon, vol. xi. p. 143.

town, by 2000 inhabitants. But, as in some other instances, the author has been driven from a comparatively vague or undefined to a strictly *literal* interpretation.

Baldness shall come upon Gaza. It shall be forsaken. The writer, after having unconsciously rested a night on the site of ancient Gaza, as the smoothest place that could be chosen whereon to pitch a tent, was for the first time aware of the literal interpretation of the prophecy, when he saw it on the spot. Detained for a day till camels could be procured, (the plague being then prevalent at Gaza,) the author spent it in traversing the sand hills on which the manifold but minute remains of an ancient city are yet in many places to be seen. Though previously holding to the interpretation given above, and not imagining that any clearer illustration could be given, and ignorant or forgetful, at the time, of any historical testimony that the site of modern differed from that of ancient Gaza, it was impossible for him to doubt that a city had once stood where innumerable vestiges of it are to be seen. The debris of ruins recognised at first sight by every traveller in the East as clearly indicating the site of an ancient city, are abundant, but most minute. Innumerable fragments of broken pottery, pieces of glass, (some of which were beautifully stained,) and of polished marble, lie thickly spread in every level and hollow place, at a considerable elevation and various distances, on a space of several square miles. These obvious indications of the site of an ancient city, recurring over a wide extent, are so abundant, that the number of different places in which they profusely lie cannot be reckoned under fifty,—which not unfrequently are surmounted by sand on every side. They generally occupy a level space, far firmer than the surrounding sand, and vary in size from small patches to more open spaces of twelve or twenty thousand square yards. The successive sand hills, or rather the same oblong sand hill,

greatly varied in its elevation, and of an undulated surface, throughout which they recur, extends to the west and west-south-west from the sea nearly to the environs of the modern Gaza.

Before approaching Gaza, unconscious where the ancient city stood, it might well be asked what is meant by baldness coming upon it. But having traversed the place on which it stood, and beholding it as it rises naked and bare above the plain, the writer could not fail to see that its perfect baldness shows how truly that word of the Lord rests upon it.¹ On his first visit, he looked in vain for any fragment of ruin one cubic foot in size, for any shrub, or plant, or blade of grass, to relieve or interrupt the perfect *baldness* that has come on Gaza. He saw nothing but a jackal freely coursing over its bare surface. The sand of the desert is nowhere more smooth and bare; and the dark spots, where nothing but the vestiges of ruins lie, are so flat and level, that they form no exception to its *baldness*.

Many of the ruins, it may well be imagined, lie buried in the sand; those that remained above the surface have been carried away, and may be found in the vicinity, imbedded in the walls of houses or court-yards of the comparatively modern town.

¹ Some supplementary evidence may here be adduced, as stated in the Narrative by Messrs Bonar and M'Cheyne.—“Dr Black remained to examine more fully the hills of sand. Dr Keith took the direction of the sea, which is about three miles distant from the modern town, starting the idea, that in all probability these heaps of sand were covering the ruins of ancient Gaza.”—“Returning to our tents, we were now prepared to verify Dr Keith's conclusion, of the truth of which he had been fully satisfied—namely, that these hills of sand, where we had pitched our tents, really cover the ruins of ancient Gaza. Each of us had found minute fragments of polished marble in the flat hollows between the sand hills, the remains no doubt of ‘the palaces of Gaza.’ We now saw in a manner we had never done before, that God had literally fulfilled his own word, ‘Baldness is come upon Gaza,’—that literally and most remarkably the appearance of *baldness* has come upon Gaza. No spot of verdure, not a single blade of grass did we see upon the sand hills. One solitary tree there was which only served to make the barrenness more remarkable. This barren, bare hill of sand, is the *bald head* of Gaza. How awfully true and faithful are the words of God!”—*Narrative*, pp. 136-138.

Nothing but historical testimony to the fact, that the site of the modern town differed from that of the ancient city, seems requisite to complete the proof that Gaza once flourished where baldness now reigns. And the geographer Strabo, who lived at the commencement of the Christian era, in describing the coast of Syria, records:—"Afterwards is the port of Gaza, and at the distance of seven furlongs the city, formerly illustrious, but destroyed by Alexander, *and remaining desert.*"¹ The distance of seven furlongs from the shore would have occupied the very site of the ancient city, as now seen by its rubbish. But the modern town lies at the distance of nearly three miles, or twenty-four furlongs. Ancient writers, not distinguishing between them, seem sometimes to have confounded the one site with the other. Jerome relates that, in his time, the beginning of the fifth century, scarcely a vestige existed of the ancient city, and that which was then seen, was built in another place, instead of the city which was utterly ruined.² In the extracts from ancient authors, whose age is uncertain, edited by Hudson, in the fourth volume of the lesser geographers, distinct mention is made of *new Gaza*, and of *desert Gaza*.³ Of the same place (rather than of the road) mention is made in the Acts, under the same name, of Gaza, which is *desert*. The very appellation it thus received, as recorded or described by Strabo and another Greek geographer, as well as in the Acts of the Apostles, and which most emphatically and truly describes it in one word,⁴—for no *desert* can be more bare,

¹ Εἰθ' ὁ τῶν Γαζαίων λιμὴν πλησίον ὑπέγκειται δε καὶ ἡ πόλις ἐν ἑπτα σταδίοις, ἐνδοξὸς ποτε γενομένη, κατεσπασμένη δ' ὑπὸ Αλέξανδρου, καὶ μένουσα ἔρημος. Strabo, tom. ii. p. 1080. Ed. Pal.

² Antiquæ civitatis locum vix fundamentorum præbere vestigia, hanc autem quæ nunc cernitur in alio loco, pro illa quæ corruit, ædificatam. Hieron. tom. iii. p. 218.

³ Relandi Palestina, tom. i. p. 509.

⁴ — πόλις μένουσα ἘΡΗΜΟΣ. Strabo.

Ἡ ἘΡΗΜΟΣ Γάζα. Rel. Pal. tom. i. p. 509.

— εἰς Γάζαν. ἄντη ἐστὶν ἘΡΗΜΟΣ. Acts viii. 26.

—shows how *baldness has come upon it*. It is worthy also of remark, as Arrian relates, that the city besieged by Alexander was great, and was situated on a height; and that the access to it was very difficult, on account of the height of the sand,¹—facts precisely applicable to the site above described, of ancient, or *desert* Gaza, but not of new Gaza.

Desert and desolate, as it has long been and still lies, not tenanted either by man or beast, *Gaza is forsaken*.

On a second visit to Gaza (1844), the writer more leisurely surveyed the site, and was fully confirmed in the opinion, that the ancient city was entombed in the sand, and that baldness had thus come upon it. In less than a mile from the present town, on a direct line towards the sea, the sand commences, and all vegetation ceases. For more than a mile and a half, in the same direction, the whole space is covered with sand, and in every hollow innumerable diminutive pieces of broken pottery and marble are spread over the surface. About twelve years ago, and for some years previously, attempts were made in various places to cultivate the sand, and hewn stones were everywhere found, where the ground was dug for planting trees, near to the old port, and between it and the modern town. Passing along the shore to the south, we came on the remains of an old wall, which reached to the sea. Ten large massy fragments of wall were imbedded in the sand, or resting on it. A large square building in ruins close by the shore seems to be the remains of some public edifice. At the farther distance of about two miles are fragments of another wall. Four intermediate fountains still exist, nearly entire, in a line along the coast, which doubtless pertained to the ancient port of Gaza. For a short distance inland, the debris is less frequent, as if marking the space

¹ Arrian, lib. ii. 26.

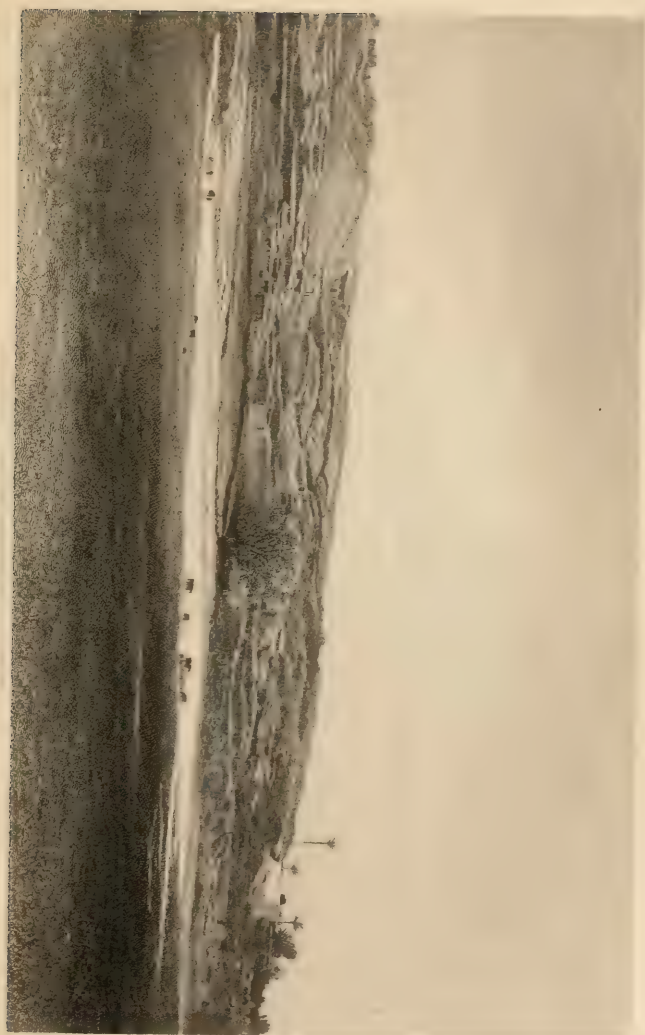
between it and the ancient city: but it again becomes plentiful in every hollow. About half a mile from the sea, we saw three pedestals of beautiful marble. And many stones had been taken to Gaza from a spot near to the sea, where an attempt had been made to form a garden; but where the trees are again partly buried in the sand. There is not a single habitation near it. Holes were still to be seen from which hewn stones had been taken; and the former secretary of Ibrahim Pasha at Gaza, and another native, (Ibrahim Jusef, and Halil Riz Alliah,) stated, that all the way between the present town and the sea, hewn stones of various sizes had been taken out of the sand, and carried to Gaza for building.

The author was not previously aware that hewn stones had been raised out of the sand, or that actual proof could thus be given of what he "imagined" to be the fact, that the ruins of the ancient city were buried in the sand. Positive information and visible proofs of the fact confirmed his previous conjecture.

It thus appears how, as in Volney's days, the ruins of white marble are *found* at Gaza, and also, as stated by General Straton, how the houses of the Aga, &c. were composed of fragments of ancient columns, cornices, &c. On the surface of the sand nothing was left worth taking away, and from beneath it the proofs come forth that where baldness reigns, the royal city stood.

Akir, a small village, has been recently identified as the site of *Ekron*. Some vestiges of the ancient city are still to be seen. But these form not now, as elsewhere throughout the land, a heap of ruins. The ground has been cleared of them; and their chief remains are now found in two or three very small spots, in the midst of ploughed fields. *Ekron has been rooted up.*

The sea-coast of Philistia shall be dwellings and cot-





tages for shepherds and folds for flocks. Such in fact it now literally is. Along the *shores* of Galilee, Samaria, and Judea, only three or four villages remain, exclusive of Tyre, Sidon, Acre, and Jaffa. But they are comparatively numerous on the *sea-coast of Philistia*. Volney, as in a previous page, well describes them as they were in his day, and as they still are, according to the prophetic description, true to the very letter, the "*huts*" are cottages for shepherds, the "court-yards," folds for flocks. Witnesses cognizant of predicted truths, can only yield a testimony corresponding to that of the sceptic. "We were much struck by observing how truly 'the sea-coast had become dwellings and cottages for shepherds, and folds for flocks,'—for the hills and vales are so completely pastoral, that from one rising ground we counted ten large flocks and herds."¹ These are driven into the villages at night, for protection from the wild beasts by the mud-walls that surround them. And the shepherds have their separate cottages and court-yards, or folds, for the black cattle, sheep, and goats that respectively belong to them. The cottages are entered on passing through the fold. Each may be distinguished in the daguerreotype view of the *remnant of Ashdod*, as the former are covered, and the latter open at the top—*folds*, not *stables* such as the ruins of Ammon supply. While the daguerreotype view was taken, the flocks were pasturing on the plain, but some cattle were browsing in the immediate vicinity of the village, beside a sheet of water as seen in the original plate. So lowly is Ashdod now, which of old was one of "the proud satrapies of Philistina," whose lords are gone, as shepherds take their place, that—though the governor of Jaffa, whom we met by the way, ordered an Arab soldier who accompanied us, to tell the sheikh to give us "the best entertainment,"—we preferred, even

¹ Narrative, p. 138.

with the prospect of a rainy night, a canvass tent to the house, or rather cottage, of the humble chief, which, like the rest, could only be entered through a filthy *fold for a flock*.

Yet in that fertile land "only man is vile;"—and incomparably more than in Edom, there is a *remnant* for the children of Israel, which awaits them still, richer than the gleanings of the land that was their own. Bare to perfect baldness as ancient Gaza is, the opposite side of the modern town may challenge any land with its rich grove of olives, (at least three miles in length,) and with that also at a short distance, in the vicinity of Migdol. Though the country, in general, is bare, and trees are clustered around villages alone, yet a solitary tree of the largest size, or three or four standing singly and far between, prove that the whole plain might be enriched anew with fruit-trees, as well as the immediate vicinity of the villages. One of the finest crops of wheat which, in either journey, the author saw in Syria, grew under the partial and protecting shade of stately olives in the plains of Gaza. Amidst visible judgments, the lingering remnant of what Philistia was, is itself an augury of better things to come in other days; for looking beyond the time in which the sea-coast should be, as it is, dwellings and cottages for shepherds and folds for flocks, the prophet of the Lord, in words as *sure*, immediately adds, *And the coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah; they shall feed thereupon: in the houses of Ashkelon they shall lie down in the evening; for the Lord their God shall visit them, and turn away their captivity: and such is the natural fertility of that coast to this day, that, though Benjamin shall possess Gilead, Judah need not envy Benjamin.*

Such are the prophecies which explicitly and avowedly refer to the land of Judea, and to the surrounding states; and such the very facts which the prophet foretold. The

predictions and the proofs of their fulfilment are so numerous, that it is impossible to concentrate them in a single view, without the exclusion of many; and they are, upon a simple comparison, so obvious and striking, that any attempt at their farther elucidation must hazard the obscuring of their clearness, and the enfeebling of their force. There is no ambiguity in the prophecies themselves, for they can bear no other interpretation but what is descriptive of the actual events. There can be no question of their genuineness or antiquity, for the countries whose future history they unveiled contained several millions of inhabitants, and numerous flourishing cities, at a period centuries subsequent to the delivery, the translation, and publication of the prophecies, and when the regular and public perusal of their Scriptures was the law and the practice of the Israelites; and they have only gradually been reduced to their existing state of long-propheesied desolation. There could not possibly have been any human means of the foresight of facts so many and so marvellous; for every natural appearance contradicted and every historical fact condemned the supposition; and nothing but continued oppression and a succession of worse than Gothic desolators,—no government on earth but the Turkish,—no spoliators but the Arabs,—could have converted such natural fertility into such utter and permanent desolation. Could it have been foreseen, that after the lapse of some hundred years, no interval of prosperity or peaceful security would occur throughout many ensuing generations, to revive its deadened energies, or to rescue from uninterrupted desolation one of the richest, and one of the most salubrious regions of the world, which the greater part of these territories naturally is? Could the present aspect of any country, with every alterable feature changed, and with every altered feature marked, have been delineated by different uninspired mortals, in various ages

from 2200 to 3300 years past? And there could not, so far as all researches have hitherto reached, be a more triumphant demonstration, from existing facts, of the truth of manifold prophecies. In reference to the complete *historical* truth of the predictions respecting the successive kings of Syria and Egypt, Bishop Newton emphatically remarks, (as Sir Isaac Newton's observations had previously proved,) that there is not so concise and comprehensive an account of their affairs to be found in any author of these times; that the prophecy is really more perfect than any single history, and that no one historian hath related so many circumstances as the prophet has foretold:¹ so that "it was necessary to have recourse to several authors for the better explaining and illustrating the great variety of particulars contained in the prophecy." The same remark in the same words, may, more obviously and with equal truth, be now applied to the *geographical*, as well as to the historical proof of the truth of prophecy. Judea, which, before the age of the prophets, had, from the uniformity and peculiarity of its government and laws, remained unvaried in a manner and to a degree unusual among nations, has since undergone many convulsions, and has for many generations been unceasingly subjected to reiterated spoliation. And now, after the lapse of more than twenty centuries, travellers see what prophets foretold. Each prediction is fulfilled in all its particulars, so far as the facts have (and in almost every case they have) been made known. But while the recent discoveries of many travellers have disclosed the state of these countries, each of their accounts presents only an imperfect delineation; and a variety of these must be combined before they bring fully into view all those diversified, discriminating, and characteristic features of the extensive scene, which were vividly depicted of old, in all their minute lines

¹ Signs of the Times, vol. i. pp. 44-73.

and varied shades, by the pencil of prophecy, and which set before us, as it were, the history, the land, and the people of Palestine.

Judea trodden down by successive desolators,—remaining uncultivated from generation to generation,—the general devastation of the country,—the mouldering ruins of its many cities,—the cheerless solitude of its once happy plains,—the wild produce of its luxuriant mountains,—the land covered with briers and thorns,—the highways waste and untrodden,—its ancient possessors scattered abroad;—the inhabitants thereof depraved in character, few in number, eating their bread with carefulness, or in constant dread of the spoiler or oppressor;—the insecurity of property,—the uselessness of labour,—the poverty of their revenues,—the land emptied and despoiled,—instrumental music ceased from among them,—the mirth of the land gone,—the use of wine prohibited in a land of vines, and the wine itself bitter unto them that drink it;—the cities desolate without inhabitant, and the houses without man;—the fortress ceased,—the forts and towers for dens,—the devastation of the land of Ammon,—the extinction of the Ammonites, the destruction of all their cities,—their country a spoil to the heathen,—and a perpetual desolation:—the desolation of Moab, its cities without any to dwell therein, and no city escaped,—the valley perished, the plain destroyed,—the wanderers that have come up against it, and that cause its inhabitants to wander,—the manner of the spoliation of the dwellers in Moab, their danger and insecurity in the plain country, and flying to the rocks for a refuge and a home, while flocks lie down among the ruins of the cities—none there to make them afraid,—and the despoiled and impoverished condition of some of its wretched wanderers:—Idumea the scene of an unparalleled desolation,—its cities utterly abandoned and destroyed, of the greater part of them no traces left,—a

desolate wilderness, over which the line of confusion is stretched out,—the country bare,—no kingdom there,—its princes and nobles nothing, and empty sepulchres their only memorials,—thistles and thorns in its palaces,—a border of wickedness, and yet greatly despised,—wisdom perished from Teman, and understanding out of the Mount of Esau,—abandoned to birds and beasts and reptiles, specified by name,—its ancient possessors cut off for ever, and no one remaining of the house of Esau:—the destruction of the cities of the Philistines,—cottages for shepherds, and folds for flocks, along the sea coast,—the remnant of the plain destroyed and unoccupied by any fixed inhabitants:—Lebanon ashamed,—its cedars, few and diminutive, now a mockery instead of a praise: and, finally, the different fate of many cities particularly defined,—the long subjection of Jerusalem to the Gentiles;—Samaria desolate, as an heap of the field, or cast down into the valley, and its foundations discovered, all so clearly marked both in the prophecy and on the spot, that they serve to fix its site;—Rabbah-Ammon, the capital of the Ammonites, now a desolate heap, a pasture for camels, and a couching-place for flocks;—judgments which have come upon many of the cities of the land of Moab by name, and upon all its cities far and near;—the chief city of Edom brought down—a court for owls—and no man dwelling in it;—Gaza forsaken, and baldness come upon it,—Ashkelon desolate, without an inhabitant,—and Ekron rooted up:—These are all ancient prophecies, and these are all present facts, which form of themselves a phalanx of evidence which all the shafts of infidelity can never pierce.

Though the countries included in these predictions comprehend a field of prophecy extending over upwards of one hundred and twenty thousand square miles, the existing state of every part of which bears witness of their truth; yet the prophets, as inspired by the God of nations, foretold

the fate of mightier monarchies, of more extensive regions, and of more powerful cities; and there is not a people, nor a country, nor a capital, which was then known to the Israelites, whose future history they did not clearly reveal. And, instead of adducing arguments from the preceding very abundant materials, or drawing those facts already adduced, to their legitimate conclusion, they may be left in their native strength, like the unhewn rock; and we may pass to other proofs which also show that the temple of Christian faith rests upon a rock that never can be moved.

CHAPTER X.

NINEVEH.

To a brief record of the creation of the antediluvian world, and of the dispersion and different settlements of mankind after the deluge, the Scriptures of the Old Testament add a full and particular history of the Hebrews for the space of fifteen hundred years, from the days of Abraham to the era of the last of the prophets. While the historical part of Scripture thus traces, from its origin, the history of the world, the prophecies give a prospective view which reaches to its end. And it is remarkable that profane history, emerging from fable, becomes clear and authentic about the very period when sacred history terminates, and when the fulfilment of those prophecies commences, which refer to other nations besides the Jews.

Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, was for a long time an extensive and populous city. Its walls are said by heathen historians, to have been a hundred feet in height, sixty miles in compass, and to have been defended by fifteen hundred towers, each two hundred feet high.¹ Although it formed the subject of some of the earliest of the prophecies, and was the very first which met its predicted fate; yet a heathen historian, in describing its capture and destruction, repeatedly refers to an ancient prediction respecting it.

¹ Diod. Sic. lib. ii. pp. 12, 13. See Bochart. Phaleg. lib. iv. c. xx. c. 252. Rollin's *Anc. Hist.* vol. ii. pp. 56, 57. Bishop Newton, Gibbon, &c. Strabo, whose testimony also has been often repeated, states that it was larger than Babylon. "It must be owned," says Calmet, "that Nineveh was one of the most ancient, the most famous, the most potent, and the largest cities of the world."

Diodorus Siculus relates, that the king of Assyria, after the complete discomfiture of his army, confided in an old prophecy, that Nineveh would not be taken unless the river should become the enemy of the city;¹ that after an ineffectual siege of two years, the river, swollen with long-continued and tempestuous torrents, inundated part of the city and threw down the wall for the space of twenty furlongs; and that the king, deeming the prediction accomplished, despaired of his safety, and erected an immense funeral pile, on which he heaped his wealth; and thus himself, his household and palace were consumed.² The book of Nahum was avowedly prophetic of the destruction of Nineveh: and it is there foretold that "the gates of the rivers shall be opened, and the palace shall be dissolved." "Nineveh, of old, like a pool of water—with an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof."³ The historian describes the facts by which the other predictions of the prophet were as literally fulfilled. He relates that the king of Assyria, elated with his former victories, and ignorant of the revolt of the Bactrians, had abandoned himself to scandalous inaction; had appointed a time of festivity, and supplied his soldiers with abundance of wine; and that the general of the enemy, apprised by deserters of their negligence and drunkenness, attacked the Assyrian army while the whole of them were fearlessly giving way to indulgence, destroyed great part of them, and drove the rest into the city.⁴ The words of the prophet were hereby verified: "While they be folden together as thorns, and while they are drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry."⁵ The prophet promised much spoil to the enemy: "Take ye the spoil of silver, take the spoil of

¹ Diod. Sic. lib. ii. pp. 82, 83, edit. Wessel. 1793. See Univ. Hist. vol. iv. pp. 305-8, v. 37, &c. Bishop Newton, p. 134, 13th edition.

² Ibid. p. 84. Poole, Univ. Hist. ibid. Bishop Newton.

³ Nahum i. ii. ⁴ Diod. Sic. lib. ii. pp. 81, 84. Univ. Hist. ibid. ⁵ Nahum i. 10.

gold; for there is none end of the store and glory out of all the pleasant furniture."¹ And the historian affirms, that many talents of gold and silver preserved from the fire, were carried to Ecbatana.² According to Nahum, the city was not only to be destroyed by an overflowing flood, but the fire also was to devour it;³ and, as Diodorus relates, partly by water, partly by fire, it was destroyed.⁴

The utter and perpetual destruction and desolation of Nineveh were foretold: "*The Lord will make an utter end of the place thereof.—Affliction shall not rise up the second time. She is empty, and void, and waste. The Lord will stretch out his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria;*

¹ Nahum ii. 9.

² Diod. p. 87. "The two armies," says Rollin, after quoting this prophecy, "enriched themselves with the spoils of Nineveh." Vol. ii. p. 103. Bishop Newton.

³ Nahum iii. 15.

⁴ See Bishop Newton's Dissertation ix. Nineveh, which first led Israel captive, was the first city of the Gentiles that met its predicted fate. The fulfilment of the prophecies concerning it, which are all contained in the short book of Nahum, and in three verses of Zephaniah, was too remarkable to pass unnoticed in the earliest ages of our era. Josephus, after briefly describing the reign of Jotham, states, that "there was at that time a prophet, named Nahum, who prophesied thus of the catastrophe or overthrow of Nineveh, 'Nineveh shall be a pool of water agitated,' &c., Nahum ii. 8-13, and he adds, that the prophet foretold many other things which it was unnecessary for him to repeat, and which were all fulfilled after the lapse of a hundred and fifteen years," Ant. lib. ix. c. 11. sect. 3. Jerome (A.D. 392,) in his preface to the book of Jonah, relates, that both Hebrew and Greek historians recorded its overthrow. (Tom. vi. c. 399, 390, ed. Venet. 1768.) And in his commentary on Nahum, he repeatedly refers to its capture and spoliation by the Chaldeans, or Babylonians, in illustration of the prophecy, Ibid. c. 534, 555, &c. In like manner, Cyril of Alexandria (A.D. 412), in his commentary on the same prophecy, quoted by Bochart, describes not only the destruction of Nineveh, but, in terms analogous to those of Lucian, its entire desolation. Besides other intervening writers who treat of the subject, Bochart, Marsham, and Poole, in the seventeenth century, adduced the testimony of Diodorus Siculus, who has long been the chief authority upon the subject, although his testimony in regard to the magnitude and subsequent destruction of Nineveh is corroborated by that of Herodotus, Strabo, Tacitus, Pliny, &c. The fall of Nineveh is described, and the prophecies both of Nahum and Zephaniah, thereby illustrated, are quoted or referred to in such well-known works published in the last century, as Prideaux's Connections (A.D. 1715), Rollin's Ancient History (A.D. 1730), The Universal History (A.D. 1747), and Bishop Newton's Dissertation on the Prophecies (A.D. 1754)—the last of which, the latest and the best, is referred to in every edition. The edition of Diodorus Siculus, from which the facts were quoted and the references taken, was published forty years after the last of these works. The facts, like the prophecies, are few, and are all included in a few pages, to which the index readily points in every edition of his works.

*and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness.—How is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in !”*¹ In the second century, Lucian, a native of a city on the banks of the Euphrates, testified that Nineveh was utterly perished,—that there was no vestige of it remaining,—and that none could tell where once it was situate.² This testimony of Lucian, and the lapse of many ages, during which the place was not known where it stood, rendered it at least somewhat doubtful whether the remains of an ancient city, opposite to Mosul, which have been described as such by travellers, were indeed those of ancient Nineveh. The name, however, was attached to the spot by the inhabitants of the country in the beginning of the seventh century. The battle of Nineveh decided the fate of Chosroes. Its locality is thus described by Gibbon: —“The Romans boldly advanced from the Araxes to the Tigris, and the timid prudence of Rhazates was content to follow them by forced marches through a desolate country, till he received a peremptory mandate to risk the fate of Persia in a decisive battle. Eastward of the Tigris, at the end of the bridge of Mosul, *the great Nineveh* had formerly been erected: *the city, and even the ruins of the city, had long since disappeared: the VACANT SPACE [empty, void, and waste]* afforded a spacious field for the operation of the two armies.”³ The great city had become “the field” of Nineveh. An *utter ruin* had been made of it at once; *affliction did not rise up a second time.* “One thing is sufficiently obvious to the most careless observer,” says Rich, who was himself a most careful observer, “which is, the equality of age of all these vestiges. Whether they belonged to Nineveh or some other city, is another question, and one not so easily determined; but that they are all of

¹ Nahum i. 8, 9; ii. 10. Zeph. ii. 13–15.

² Bochart, Marsham, Calmet, Bishop Newton, &c.

³ Hist. vol. viii. pp. 250, 251, c. 46.

the same age and character does not admit of a doubt,"¹ "Pottery, and other Babylonian fragments"—"fragments of cuneiform inscriptions on stone, similar in every respect to those got at Babylon,"² are found in the mounds that constitute the ruins. In contrasting the then existing great and increasing population, and the accumulating wealth of the proud inhabitants of the mighty Nineveh, with the utter ruin that awaited it,—the word of God, (before whom all the inhabitants of the earth are as grasshoppers), by Nahum was—*Make thyself many as the canker-worm, make thyself many as the locusts. Thou hast multiplied thy merchants above the stars of heaven: the canker-worm spoileth and fleeth away. Thy crowned are as the locusts, and thy captains as the great grasshoppers, which camp in the hedges in the cold day; but when the sun ariseth, they flee away; and their place is not known where they are,*³ or were. Whether these words imply that even the site of Nineveh would in future ages be uncertain or unknown, or as they rather seem to intimate, that every vestige of the palaces of its monarchs, of the greatness of its nobles, and of the wealth of its numerous merchants, would wholly disappear; the truth of the prediction cannot be invalidated under either interpretation. The avowed ignorance respecting Nineveh, and the oblivion which passed over it, for many an age, prove that the place was long unknown where it stood. And, if the only spot that bears its name, or that can be said to be the place where it was, be indeed the site of one of the most extensive of cities on which the sun ever shone, and which continued for many centuries to be the capital of Assyria,—the "principal mounds," few in number, in many places overgrown with grass, "resemble the mounds left by intrenchments and fortifications of ancient Roman camps," and the

¹ Rich's Residence in Koordistan and Nineveh, vol. ii. p. 44.

² Ibid. pp. 38, 55.

³ Ch. iii. 15-17.

appearances of other mounds and ruins, less marked than even these, extending for ten miles, and widely spread, and seeming to be “the wreck of former buildings,”¹ show that Nineveh is left without one monument of royalty, without any token or memorial of its ancient splendour and magnificence; and so entirely are the very vestiges of the city in many places swept away, that of a large space which the plough has passed over for ages, it is said, “what part was covered by ancient Nineveh it is nearly now impossible to ascertain.”² “The country,” “this uneven country,” are epithets descriptive of its supposed site. “In such a country it is not easy to say what are ruins and what are not; what is art converted by the lapse of ages into a semblance of nature, and what is merely nature broken by the hand of time into ruins approaching in their appearance those of art.”³ Of the merchants, that were multiplied above the stars of heaven—of the crowned and of the captains of the great Nineveh, it may be said, that they were as the great grasshoppers, which, camping in the hedges in a cold day, flee away on the rising of the sun, and their place is not known where they were. Neither from the low grounds, covered with bushes of tamarisk, where it is not cultivated,⁴ nor from the high country completely covered with pebbles,⁵ could it be known where the nobles of Nineveh were. “The *name* of Nineveh,” said Volney, “seems to be threatened with the same oblivion which has overtaken its greatness.”⁶ *The Lord hath given a commandment concerning thee, that no more of thy name be sown:—I will make thy grave, for thou art vile. Darkness shall pursue his enemies.*⁷ The great Nineveh is no more. No more of its name is sown: the town near to its site is called by another name. But its name written in the word of God,

¹ Buckingham's Travels in Mesopotamia, vol. ii. pp. 49, 51, 62.

² Rich's Residence in Koordistan, vol. ii. p. 53.

³ Ibid. p. 57. ⁴ Ibid. p. 62. ⁵ Ibid. p. 59. ⁶ Ruins, c. 8. ⁷ Nahum i. 8, 14.

shall not pass into oblivion, till tongues shall cease and prophecy fail.

The Lord did *make the grave* of Nineveh. And, disclosing at last its ancient glory, else but obscurely known, it has of late been partly disinterred. There is now another proof than that of the largeness of a heap, where the palace stood. And the written record of the manner of its destruction is accredited as if by a voice from its grave. The government of France has become the purveyor of evidence: and Paris might learn a lesson from the shipload of the relics of Nineveh, ere the *cities of the nations fall*. More may hence be learned than the knowledge of Assyrian arts.

“Nineveh, the city of fifteen hundred towers, whose walls were a hundred feet in height, and had space on their summits for three chariots abreast, seemed more utterly ruined than even Babylon; yet from beneath its dust has the long buried arts of the Assyrian been recovered. Fifteen halls of this vast palace, with their corresponding esplanades, have been cleared. The rest of the monument, it is made quite certain, has been destroyed,—intentionally however, the stones having been carried off to serve for other buildings. A fortunate accident—that would seem an evil one at the time—has preserved for us what remains. This portion of the palace has been ravaged by fire, which has entirely destroyed only the timbers of the roofs: but as the other calcined materials were rendered useless for new constructions, they have been left where they were; and thus one-third of the edifice remains to testify of the rest.”¹ “Fifteen chambers, some above a hundred feet in length, and evidently forming part of a magnificent palace, have been opened. Their walls are entirely covered with inscriptions and sculptures. The latter are almost without exception historical, and illustrate events of the highest interest, sieges, naval

¹ Athenæum, No. 900. January 25, 1845, p. 99.

manceuvres, triumphs, single combats, &c. The inscriptions are in the cuneiform character, and are of such great length that all the arrow-headed inscriptions before known, if united together, would not equal them. Although the ornaments, robes, and various implements of war are finished with extraordinary precision, they do not detract from the effect of the whole, nor do they add heaviness to the figures. The extreme beauty and elegance of the various objects introduced among the groups, are next to be admired. The shapes of the vases, of the drinking-cups, the sword-scarbards adorned with lions, and the shields decorated with animals and flowers—the chairs, tables, and other articles of domestic use,—the ornaments of the head, and bracelets and ear-rings, are all designed with the most consummate taste, and rival the productions of the most cultivated period of Greek art.”¹ “Nineveh seemed more utterly ruined than even Babylon: yet *from beneath its dust* have the *long buried arts* of the Assyrian been discovered.” *I will make thy grave. I will cast abominable filth upon thee, and make thee vile, and will set thee as a gazing-stock.*²

“Fifteen halls of this vast palace, with their corresponding esplanades, have been cleared. This portion of the palace has been ravaged with *fire*, which has entirely destroyed only the timbers of the roofs: but as the other calcined materials were rendered useless for new constructions, they have been left where they were; and thus one-third of the edifice remains to testify of the rest.” *While they be folden together as thorns, and while they are drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry. The fire shall devour thy bars. There shall the fire devour thee.*³

The buried arts of the Assyrian have been recovered from beneath the dust of Nineveh. And still figured on the cal-

¹ Athenæum, No. 901, pp. 120, 122.

² Nahum i. 14; iii. 6.

³ Nahum i. 10; iii. 13, 15.

cined walls of the disintombed palace, are vases, drinking-cups, decorated scabbards and shields, chairs, tables, and other *articles for domestic use*, ornaments of the head, and bracelets and ear-rings, all designed with the most consummate taste, so as to rival the productions of the most cultivated period of Greek art—and also figures of the very things of which the prophet spake, in issuing his mandate to the enemies of Nineveh, to be obeyed ere that city should be turned into its grave. *Take ye the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold; for there is none end of the store and glory out of all the pleasant furniture.*

Such was, and such is, the capital of Assyria, which led Israel captive—and such the evidence that when raised from the *grave*, it discloses, that the God of Israel is the Lord of Hosts, and that all the vain glories of the proudest mortals perish at his word.

All controversy or question is now at an end respecting the mounds or ruinous heaps near to Mosul, as those of Nineveh of old. “Bricks from Kouyunjik are inscribed with the name of Nineveh.”¹ Of “the discoveries in the ruined palace of Sennacherib” at the time of his departure for Europe, Mr Layard says, “In this magnificent edifice I had opened no less than seventy-one halls, chambers, and passages, whose walls, almost without an exception, had been panelled with slabs of sculptured alabaster, recording the wars, the triumphs, and the great deeds of the Assyrian king. By a rough calculation, about 9880 feet, or nearly two miles, of bas-reliefs, with twenty-seven portals, formed by colossal winged bulls and lion-sphinxes, were uncovered in that part alone of the building explored during my researches. The greatest length of the excavations was about 750 feet; the greatest breadth 600 feet. The pavement of the chambers was from 20 to 35 feet below the surface of

¹ Layard's Nineveh and Babylon, p. 639.

the ground. Only a part of the palace has been excavated, and much still remains under ground of this enormous structure. Since my return to Europe, other rooms and sculptures have been discovered.—The excavations were not limited to the corner of Kouyunjik, containing the palace. Deep trenches and tunnels were opened, and experimental shafts sunk in various parts of the mound. Enormous walls and foundations of brick masonry, fragments of sculptured and unsculptured alabaster, inscribed bricks, numerous small objects, and various other remains were discovered.”¹

“There are ravines on all sides of the Kouyunjik, except that facing the Tigris. If not entirely worn by the winter rains, they have, undoubtedly, been deepened and increased by them. They are strewn with fragments of pottery, bricks, and sometimes stones and burnt alabaster, whilst the falling earth frequently discloses in their sides vast masses of solid brick masonry, which fell in when undermined by the rains,” &c.² “The sculptures of Kouyunjik had been exposed to the fire which had destroyed the palace.”³

¹ Layard's *Nineveh and Babylon*, p. 589.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.* p. 458.

CHAPTER XI.

BABYLON.

IF ever there was a city that seemed to bid defiance to any predictions of its fall, that city was Babylon. It was for a long time the most famous city in the whole world.¹ Its walls, which were reckoned among the wonders of the world, appeared rather like the bulwarks of nature than the workmanship of man.² The temple of Belus, half a mile in circumference and a furlong in height—the hanging gardens, which, piled in successive terraces, towered as high as the walls—the embankments which restrained the Euphrates—the hundred brazen gates—and the adjoining artificial lake—all displayed many of the mightiest works of mortals concentrated in a single point.³ Yet, while in the plenitude of its power, and according to the

¹ Plinii Hist. Nat. lib. v. cap. xxvi.

² The extent of the walls of Babylon is variously stated, by Herodotus at 480 stadia, or furlongs, in circumference; by Pliny and Solinus at sixty Roman miles, or of equal extent; by Strabo at 385 stadia; by Diodorus Siculus, according to the slightly different testimony of Ctesias and Clitarchus, both of whom visited Babylon, at 360 or 365; and to the last of these statements that of Quintus Curtius nearly corresponds, viz. 368. The difference of a few stadia rather confirms than disproves the general accuracy of the three last of these accounts. There may have been an error in the text of Herodotus of 480, instead of 380, which Pliny and Solinus may have copied. The variation of 20 or 25 stadia, in excess, may have been caused by the line of measurement having been the outside of the trench, and not immediately of the wall. And thus the various statements may be brought nearly to correspond. Major Rennel, estimating the stadium at 491 feet, computes the extent of the wall at 34 miles, or eight and a half on each side. The opposite and contradictory statements of the height and breadth of the wall may possibly be best reconciled on the supposition that they refer to different periods. Herodotus states the height to have been 200 cubits, or 300 feet, and the breadth 50 cubits, 75 feet. According to Curtius, the height was 130 feet, and the breadth 32; while Strabo states the height at 75 feet, and the breadth at 32 feet.

³ Herod. lib. i. c. clxxviii. Diodor. Sic. lib. ii. p. 26. (Calmet.) Plin. lib. v. xxvi. Quintus Curtius, lib. v. c. iv. See Prideaux, Rollin, &c.

most accurate chronologers, 160 years before the foot of an enemy had entered it, the voice of prophecy pronounced the doom of the mighty and unconquered Babylon. A succession of ages brought it gradually to the dust; and the gradation of its fall is marked till it sunk at last into utter desolation. At a time when nothing but magnificence was around Babylon the great, fallen Babylon was delineated exactly as every traveller now describes its ruins.—And the prophecies concerning it may be viewed connectedly from the period of their earliest to that of their latest fulfilment.

The immense fertility of Chaldea, which retained also the name of Babylonia till after the Christian era,¹ corresponded, if that of any country could vie, with the greatness of Babylon. It was the most fertile region of the whole east.² Babylonia was one vast plain, adorned and enriched by the Euphrates and the Tigris, from which, and from the numerous canals that intersected the country from the one river to the other, water was distributed over the fields by manual labour and by hydraulic machines,³ giving rise, in that warm climate and rich exhaustless soil, to an exuberance of produce without a known parallel, over so extensive a region, either in ancient or modern times. Herodotus states, that he knew not how to speak of its wonderful fertility, which none but eye-witnesses would credit; and, though writing in the language of Greece, itself a fertile country, he expresses his own consciousness that his description of what he actually saw would appear to be improbable, and to exceed belief. In his estimation, as well as that of Strabo and of Pliny, (the three best ancient authorities that can be given,) Babylonia was of all countries the most fertile in corn, the soil never producing less, as he relates, than two

¹ Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 743.

² "Agrum totius orientis fertilissimum." (Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. v. c. xxvi.)

³ Herod. lib. i. c. xcii.

hundred fold, an amount, in our colder regions, scarcely credible, though Strabo, the first of ancient geographers, agrees with the "father of history" in recording that it reached even to three hundred, the grain, too, being of prodigious size.¹ After being subjected to Persia, the government of Chaldea was accounted the noblest in the Persian empire.² Besides supplying horses for military service, it maintained about seventeen thousand horses for the sovereign's use. And, exclusive of monthly subsidies, the supply from Chaldea (including perhaps Syria) for the subsistence of the king and of his army, amounted to a third part of all that was levied from the whole of the Persian dominions, which at that time extended from the Hellespont to India.³ Herodotus incidentally mentions that there were four great towns in the vicinity of Babylon.

Such was the "Chaldee's excellency," that it departed not on the first conquest, nor on the final extinction of its capital, but one metropolis of Assyria rose after another in the land of Chaldea, when Babylon had ceased to be "the glory of kingdoms." The celebrated city of Seleucia, whose ruins attest its former greatness, was *founded* and *built* by Seleucus Nicator, king of Assyria, one of the successors of Alexander the Great, in the year before Christ 293,—three centuries after Jeremiah prophesied. In the first century of the Christian era it contained six hundred thousand inhabitants.⁴ The Parthian kings transferred the seat of empire to Ctesiphon, on the opposite bank of the Tigris, where they resided in winter; and that city, formerly a village, became great and powerful.⁵ Six centuries after the latest of the predictions, Chaldea could also boast of other great cities,⁶

¹ Herod. lib. i. c. cxcii. Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 742.

² Ibid. lib. i. c. cxcii.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Plin. lib. vi. c. xxvi.

⁵ Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 743.

⁶ Ibid. p. 744.

such as Artemita and Sitacene, besides many towns. When invaded by Julian, it was, as described by Gibbon, a "fruitful and pleasant country." And, at a period equally distant from the time of the prophets and from the present day, in the seventh century, Chaldea was the scene of vast magnificence, in the reign of Chosroes. "His favourite residence of Artemita or Destagered, was situated beyond the Tigris, about sixty miles to the north of the capital (Ctesiphon). The adjacent pastures," in the words of Gibbon, "were covered with flocks and herds; the paradise, or park, was replenished with pheasants, peacocks, ostriches, roebucks, and wild boars; and the noble game of lions and tigers was sometimes turned loose for the golden pleasures of the chase. Nine hundred and sixty elephants were maintained for the use and splendour of the great king; his tents and baggage were carried into the field by twelve thousand great camels, and eight thousand of a smaller size; and the royal stables were filled with six thousand mules and horses. Six thousand guards successively mounted before the palace gate, and the service of the interior apartments was performed by twelve thousand slaves. The various treasures of gold, silver, gems, silk, and aromatics, were deposited in an hundred subterranean vaults,"¹—In the eighth century the towns of Samarah, Horounieh, and Djasserik, formed, so to speak, one street of twenty-eight miles."² Chaldea, with its rich soil and warm climate, and intersected by the Tigris and Euphrates, was one of the last countries in the world, of which the desolation could have been thought of by man. For to this day "there cannot be a doubt, that, if proper means were taken, the *country*

¹ Gibbon's History, vol. viii. c. 46, pp. 227, 228.

² Malte-Brun's Geography, vol. ii. p. 119. Historical documents are not wanting to prove that the richness of Chaldea, down to the time of the Arabian califs, was such as to give the charm of truth (which, indeed, it is generally admitted that they possess) to many of the splendid descriptions which abound in the otherwise fictitious narratives of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments.

would with ease be brought into a high state of cultivation."¹

Manifold are the prophecies respecting Babylon and the land of the Chaldeans; and the long lapse of ages has served to confirm the words which were uttered against them when Babylon was in all its glory. The judgments of Heaven are not casual, but sure; they are not arbitrary, but righteous. And they were denounced against the Babylonians, and the inhabitants of Chaldea, expressly because of their idolatry, tyranny, oppression, pride, covetousness, drunkenness, falsehood, and other wickedness. So debasing and brutifying was their idolatry,—or so much did they render the name of religion subservient to their passions,—that practices the most abominable, which were universal among them, formed the very observance of some of their religious rites, of which even heathen writers could not speak but in terms of indignation and abhorrence. Though enriched with a prodigality of blessings, the glory of God was not regarded by the Chaldeans; and all the glory of man, with which the plain of Shinar was covered, has become, in consequence as well as in chastisement of prevailing vices and of continued though diversified crimes, the wreck, the ruin, and utter desolation which the word of God (for whose word but his?) thus told from the beginning that the event would be.

“The burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see.—The noise of a multitude in the mountains, like as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together; the Lord of hosts mustereth the host of the battle. They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, even the Lord, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land.—Behold I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard

¹ Bombay Philosophical Transactions, vol. i. p. 124.

silver; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it. Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare children. And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there; but wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces."¹ "Thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased! Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee. Thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. Thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch. I will cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant, and son, and nephew, saith the Lord. I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water; and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of hosts."² "Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground."³ "Thus saith the Lord—that saith to the deep, Be dry; and I will dry up thy rivers; that saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure,⁴—and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut."⁵ "Bel boweth down," &c.⁶ "Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Baby-

¹ Isa. xiii. 1, 4, 5, 17-22.

² Isa. xxi. 9.

³ Isa. xlv. 1.

⁴ Isa. xiv. 4, 11, 15, 19, 22, 23.

⁵ Isa. xlv. 24, 27, 28.

⁶ Isa. xlv. 1.

lon; sit on the ground: there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans. Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans; for thou shalt no more be called The lady of kingdoms. Thou saidst I shall be a lady for ever.—Hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly; that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else besides me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children. But these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection, for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments. For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness:" &c.—Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth: and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off: and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know."¹

"I will punish the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations. And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations. For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also: and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands."² "The word that the Lord spake against Babylon, and against the land of the Chaldeans, by Jeremiah the prophet. Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard; publish, and conceal not; say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces. For out of the north there cometh up a nation against her, which shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein; they shall remove, they shall depart,

¹ Isa. xlvii. 1, 5, 7-11.

² Jer. xxv. 12-14.

both man and beast.”¹ “For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country; and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken; their arrows shall be as of a mighty expert man; none shall return in vain. And Chaldea shall be a spoil; all that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the Lord. Behold, the hindermost of the nations shall be a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert. Because of the wrath of the Lord it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate: every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues.”² “Her foundations are fallen, her walls are thrown down; for it is the vengeance of the Lord; take vengeance upon her; as she hath done, do unto her. Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest: for fear of the oppressing sword they shall turn every one to his people, and they shall flee every one to his own land.”³ “Go up against the land of Merathaim, even against it, and against the inhabitants of Pekod; waste and utterly destroy after them.—A sound of battle is in the land, and of great destruction. How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken! how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations! I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware; thou art found, and also caught, because thou hast striven against the Lord. The Lord hath opened his armoury, and hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation: for this is the work of the Lord God of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans. Come against her from the utmost border, open her store-houses; cast her up as heaps, and destroy her utterly; let nothing of her be left.”⁴ “The voice of them that flee and escape out of the land of Babylon, to declare in Zion the vengeance of the Lord our

¹ Jer. l. 1, 2, 3.² Jer. l. 9, 10, 12, 13.³ Jer. l. 15, 16.⁴ Jer. l. 21-23.

God, the vengeance of his temple. Call together the archers against Babylon: all ye that bend the bow, camp against her round about: let none thereof escape: recompense her according to her work; according to all that she hath done, do unto her: for she hath been proud against the Lord, against the Holy One of Israel. Therefore shall her young men fall in the streets, and all her men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the Lord. Behold, I am against thee, O thou most proud, saith the Lord God of hosts: for thy day is come, the time that I will visit thee. And the most proud shall stumble and fall, and none shall raise him up: and I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him.”¹ “A sword is upon the Chaldeans, saith the Lord, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon, and upon her princes, and upon her wise men. A sword is upon the liars;—a sword is upon her mighty men;—a sword is upon their horses, and upon their chariots, and upon all the mingled people that are in the midst of her, and they shall become as women; a sword is upon her treasures; and they shall be robbed. A drought is upon her waters; and they shall be dried up; for it is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols. Therefore the wild beasts of the desert, with the wild beasts of the islands, shall dwell there, and the owls shall dwell therein: and it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the Lord; so shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein. Behold, a people shall come from the north, and a great nation, and many kings shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. They shall hold the bow and the lance; they are cruel, and will not show mercy; their voice shall roar like the sea,

¹ Jer. l. 28-32.

and they shall ride upon horses, every one put in array, like a man to the battle, against thee, O daughter of Babylon. The king of Babylon hath heard the report of them, and his hands waxed feeble: anguish took hold of him, and pangs as of a woman in travail. Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan unto the habitation of the strong; but I will make them suddenly run away from her; and who is a chosen man, that I may appoint over her? for who is like me? and who will appoint me the time? and who is that shepherd that will stand before me? Therefore hear ye the counsel of the Lord, that he hath taken against Babylon, and his purposes, that he hath purposed against the land of the Chaldeans; surely the least of the flock shall draw them out; surely he shall make their habitation desolate with them.¹ I will send unto Babylon fanners, that shall fan her, and shall empty her land: for in the day of trouble they shall be against her round about. Against him that bendeth let the archer bend his bow, and against him that lifteth himself up in his brigandine: and spare ye not her young men; destroy ye utterly all her host. Thus the slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans, and they that are thrust through in her streets, &c. Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: howl for her; take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her, and let us go every one unto his own country, for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies.² The Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes: for his device is against Babylon to destroy it, &c. O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures, thine end is come, and the measure of thy covetousness. The Lord of hosts hath sworn by himself, saying, Surely I will fill thee with men,

¹ Jer. l. 35-45.² Jer. li. 2-4, 8, 9.

as with caterpillars; and they shall lift up a shout against thee.¹ Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the Lord, which destroyest all the earth; and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain. Set ye up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her; call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz;—prepare against her the nations, with the kings of the Medes, the captains thereof, and all the rulers thereof, and all the land of his dominion. And the land shall tremble and sorrow; *for every purpose* of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant. The mighty men of Babylon have forborne to fight, they have remained in their holds; their might hath failed; they became as women; they have burnt her dwelling-places; her bars are broken. One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to show the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end, and that the passages are stopped.—Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing-floor: it is time to thresh her; yet a little while, and the time of her harvest shall come.² I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry. And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant. In their heat I will make their feasts, and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake. How is the praise of the whole earth surprised! How is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations! The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof. Her cities are a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither

¹ Jer. li. 11, 13, 14.

² Jer. li. 25, 27–33.

doth any son of man pass thereby. And I will punish Bel in Babylon; and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up: and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him; yea the wall of Babylon shall fall. A rumour shall both come one year, and after that in another year shall come a rumour, and violence in the land, ruler against ruler. Therefore, behold, the days come that I will do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon; and her whole land shall be confounded, and all her slain shall fall in the midst of her, &c.¹ And I will make drunk her princes, and her wise men, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men; and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King, whose name is the Lord of hosts. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; and the people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary. And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates; and thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her."²

The enemies who were to besiege Babylon—the cowardice of the Babylonians—the manner in which the city was taken, and all the remarkable circumstances of the siege, were foretold and described by the prophets as the facts are related by ancient historians.

*Go up, O Elam (or Persia); besiege, O Media! The Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes; for his device is against Babylon to destroy it.*³ The kings of Persia and Media, prompted by a common interest, freely entered into a league against Babylon, and with one accord intrusted the command of their united armies to Cyrus,⁴ the

¹ Jer. li. 36, 37, 39, 41–44, 46, 47.

² Jer. li. 57, 58, 63, 64.

³ Jackson (Dr Thos.), Grotius, Poole, Prideaux, Lowth, Rollin, Bishop Newton, &c.

⁴ Xenoph. Cyrop. lib. i. c. v. p. 53, ed. Hutch. Glasg. 1821.

relative and eventually the successor of them both. But the taking of Babylon was not reserved for these kingdoms alone; other nations had to be *prepared against her*.

*Set ye up a standard in the land; blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her, call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz. Lo, I will raise, and cause to come up against Babylon, an assembly of great nations from the north country, &c.*¹ Cyrus subdued the Armenians, who had revolted against Media, spared their king, bound them over anew to their allegiance, by kindness rather than by force, and incorporated their army with his own.² He adopted the Hyrcanians, who had rebelled against Babylon, as allies and confederates with the Medes and Persians.³ He conquered the united forces of the Babylonians and Lydians, took Sardis, with Cræsus and all his wealth, spared his life, after he was at the stake, restored to him his family and his household, received him into the number of his counsellors and friends, and thus *prepared* the Lydians, over whom he reigned, and who were formerly combined with Babylon, for *coming up against it*.⁴ He overthrew also the Phrygians and Cappadocians, and added their armies in like manner to his accumulating forces.⁵ And by successive alliances and conquests, by proclaiming liberty to the slaves, by a humane policy, consummate skill, and a pure and noble disinterestedness, and a boundless generosity, he changed, within the space of twenty years, a confederacy which the king of Babylon had raised up against the Medes and Persians, whose junction he feared, into a confederacy even of the same nations against Babylon itself;—and thus *a standard was set up against Babylon in many a land, kingdoms were summoned, prepared, and gathered together*

¹ Jackson, Grotius, Poole, &c. &c.

² Xenoph. Cyrop. lib. iii. c. i. p. 156.

³ Ibid. lib. iv. c. ii. pp. 215, 217.

⁴ Xenoph. lib. v. c. ii. pp. 408, 416.

⁵ Ibid. lib. vii. c. iv. pp. 427, 428.

against her; and an assembly of great nations from the north,—including Ararat and Minni, or the greater and lesser Armenia, and Ashchenaz, or according to Bochart, Phrygia,—were raised up and caused to come against Babylon. Without their aid, and before they were subjected to his authority, he had attempted in vain to conquer Babylon; but when he had prepared and gathered them together, it was taken, though by artifice more than by power.

They shall hold the bow and the lance—they shall ride upon horses—let the archer bend his bow—all ye that bend the bow shoot at her. They rode upon horses. Forty thousand Persian horsemen were armed from among the nations which Cyrus subdued; many horses of the captives were besides distributed among all the allies. And Cyrus came up against Babylon with a great multitude of horses;¹ and also with a great multitude of archers and javelin-men,² *that held the bow and the lance.*

No sooner had Cyrus reached Babylon, with the nations which he had prepared and gathered against her, than in hope of discovering some point not utterly impregnable, accompanied by his chief officers and friends, he rode around the walls, and examined them on every side, after having for that purpose stationed his whole army round the city.³ *They camped against it round about. They put themselves in array against Babylon round about.*

Frustrated in the attempt to discover, throughout the whole circumference, a single assailable point, and finding that it was not possible, by any attack, to make himself master of walls so strong and so high, and fearing that his army would be exposed to the assault of the Babylonians by a too extended and consequently weakened lines,—Cyrus, standing in the middle of his army, gave orders that

¹ Xenoph. Cyrop. vii. c. iv. p. 423.

² Ibid. p. 429.

³ Ibid. c. v.

the heavy armed men should move, in opposite directions, from each extremity towards the centre ; and the horse and light armed men being nearer and advancing first, and the phalanx being redoubled and closed up, the bravest troops thus occupied alike the front and the rear, and the less effective were stationed in the middle.¹ Such a disposition of the army, in the estimation of Xenophon, himself a most skilful general, was well adapted both for fighting and preventing flight; while the Christian, judging differently of their successive movements, may here see the fulfilment of one prediction after another. For, as in this manner “they stood facing the walls,” in regular order, and not as a disorderly and undisciplined host, though composed of various nations, *they set themselves in array against Babylon, every man put in array.*

A trench was dug round the city,—towers were erected—Babylon was besieged—the army was divided into twelve parts, that each, monthly by turn, might keep watch throughout the year;²—and though the orders were given by Cyrus, the command of the Lord of Hosts was unconsciously obeyed—*let none thereof escape.*

*The mighty men of Babylon have forborne to fight. They have remained in their holds ; their might hath failed, they became as women.*³ Babylon had been the hammer of the whole earth, by which nations were broken in pieces, and kingdoms destroyed. Its mighty men carried the terror of their arms to distant regions, and led nations captive. But they were *dismayed* according to the word of the God of Israel, whenever the nations which he had stirred up against them stood in array before their walls. Their timidity, so clearly predicted, was the express complaint and accusation of their enemies, who in vain attempted

¹ Xenoph. Cyrop. vii. c. iv. 430.

² Ibid. pp. 430, 434.

³ Pridcaux, Lowth, Bishop Newton, &c.

to provoke them to the contest. Cyrus challenged their monarch to single combat, but also in vain;¹ for *the hands of the king of Babylon waxed feeble*. Courage had departed from both prince and people; and none attempted to save their country from spoliation, or to chase the assailants from their gates. They sallied not forth against the invaders and besiegers, nor did they attempt to disjoin and disperse them, even when drawn all around their walls, and comparatively weak along the extended line. Every gate was still shut; and *they remained in their holds*. Being as unable to rouse their courage, even by a close blockade, and to bring them to the field, as to scale or break down any portion of their stupendous walls, or to force their gates of solid brass, Cyrus reasoned that the greater their number, the more easily would they be starved into surrender, and yield to famine, since they would not contend with arms or come forth to fight. And hence arose for the space of two years his only hope of eventual success. So dispirited became its people, that Babylon, which had made the world as a wilderness, was long unresistingly a beleaguered town. But, possessed of many fertile fields, and of provisions for twenty years, which in their timid caution they had plentifully stored, they derided Cyrus from their impregnable walls within which they *remained*.² Their profligacy, their wickedness and false confidence were unabated; they continued to live carelessly in pleasures, but their might did not return; and Babylon the Great, unlike to many a small fortress and unwall'd town, made not one effort to regain its freedom, or to be rid of the foe.

Much time having been lost, and no progress having been made in the siege, the anxiety of Cyrus was strongly excited, and he was reduced to a great perplexity, when at last it

¹ Xen. Cyrop. lib. v. c. iii. p. 290.

² Ibid. l. vii. c. v. p. 434. Herod. l. i. c. cxc.

was suggested and immediately determined on, to turn the course of the Euphrates. But the task was not an easy one. The river was a quarter of a mile broad, and twelve feet deep, and, in the opinion of one of the counsellors of Cyrus, the city was stronger by the river than by its walls. Diligent and laborious preparation was made for the execution of the scheme, yet so as to deceive the Babylonians. And the great trench, ostensibly formed for the purpose of blockade, which for the time it effectually secured, was dug around the walls on every side, in order to drain the Euphrates, and to leave its channel a straight passage into the city, through the midst of which it flowed. When all things were in readiness for the execution of his design, Cyrus, having formed his army into two great divisions, stationed them respectively where the river entered, and where it emerged from the city, and hasted with the ineffective part of his troops to the lake which the queen of Babylon had made, and suddenly diverted the course of the Euphrates. So soon as the water ceased to flow into its wonted channel, Cyrus having returned to his army, commanded those about him to descend into the dry part of the river,¹ to ascertain if a passage could be effected; and on their reporting its practicability, the order was given to the vast besieging army to pass by the bed of the river as a road into the city. *"I will dry up her sea, and make the springs dry. Thus saith the Lord,—that saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers. A drought is upon her waters; and they shall be dried up."*²

Each command of Cyrus, and each act of his army, as related by Herodotus and Xenophon, shows how the pleasure of the Lord and his purpose against Babylon were performed.

¹ Εἰς τὸ ξηρὸν τοῦ ποταμοῦ, Xen. vii. 5, p. 435. Τους ποταμούς του ξηρανῶ. Septuagint translation.

² Grotius, Jackson, Prideaux, Lowth, Rollin, Bishop Newton, &c.

The father of history expresses a doubt whether the device, by which a way, unimpeded by the impregnable walls, was opened into Babylon, was the invention of Cyrus, or the suggestion of another. But there is not a doubt in history that then, as at a future period, *a snare was laid for Babylon*.¹

The execution of an enterprise so hazardous, demanded the greatest circumspection and regularity of movement. And Cyrus gave orders to each Persian captain of a thousand men, cavalry as well as infantry, to be at his post and in his own presence, at the head of his soldiers, ranged two and two, to be followed by the allies in their wonted order.² And thus watching their time and preserving their ranks, they marched into the city, every man in the order previously prescribed. That men should have rode in hostile array against such a city as Babylon, begirt with stupendous walls, except where a deep river passed between them, is not the least wonder of the siege. But Cyrus, with his many thousands of horsemen, and Alexander afterwards with his band of Greeks, were both the servants of the Lord in accomplishing the prediction. *They shall ride upon horses, every man put in array, like a man to the battle against thee, O daughter of Babylon.*

While hosts of enemies thus stole into Babylon, like a thief into a house by stratagem and at night, no situation for the moment could have been more critical and dangerous than theirs: for if the design had been discovered, and if the gates leading from the river to the city had been shut, they would have been shut up as in a net, as Herodotus relates,³ and their destruction would have been seemingly inevitable; and but for the word that never errs, and the eye that watches over all, the assailants would have been the

¹ Grotius, Jackson, &c.

² Xen. vii. 5, p. 435.

³ Her. lib. i. c. xcxi. Jackson, &c.

victims. But the Babylonians, given up on that night to intemperance in honour of their gods, exercised no caution as they felt no fear, and the enemy passed into the city without obstruction or opposition,—for, though they knew it not, the prophecy was true, *the gates shall not be shut*.

To encourage his troops to pass fearlessly through the streets, and to cast off the dread of being assailed with darts from the roofs of the houses, Cyrus previously announced that the doors were of palm-wood, covered with bitumen, and would easily be set on fire by the torches and inflammable matter with which, for that intent, they were plentifully supplied.¹ *They have burnt her dwelling-places; her bars are broken.* To which it is added,

One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to show the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end; and that the passages are stopped, and the reeds they have burned with fire, and the men of war are affrighted. The king was in the city, and yet had to be told that it was taken. The seeming enigma, that messengers should run in different and opposite directions, to convey to the same place tidings of the same event, is expounded by the fact of the nearly simultaneous entrance of the enemy at both ends of Babylon, between which the space of at least eight miles intervened. In attempting to bear with all expedition the disastrous tidings to the king in his palace, situated near the centre of the city, messengers from each *end* would thus necessarily so *run* as to *meet* each *other*, unconscious that the same message was alike borne by both, and that their speed would be in vain. The proof is not here the less striking because it is inferential; for it may well be presumed that such *messengers* did *run*, and that the numerous torches of the invading host were not borne in vain.

¹ Xen. lib. vii. 5, p. 436.

The river, from its great breadth and depth, and its sides being walled and strongly fortified, was held to be a defence of the city, rivalling, if not surpassing, that of the walls. And the city was taken, not only in a manner most unsuspected, but at a time when the Babylonians were the most unprepared and all sobriety and vigilance set aside. Herodotus relates, on the testimony of the inhabitants, that from the great extent of the city, and its being taken at the time of a feast, while the people were given up to dancing and indulgence, those who lived in the utmost parts of the city were in the hands of their enemies, before those who dwelt in the centre were conscious of the fact.¹ And though it may seem incredible that, as Aristotle relates, the tidings were unknown in some places within the walls on the third day; yet such a statement from such a pen, adds to the proof of the predicted fact. There was no alarm from without; nor even the appearance of a foe. Not a gate of the city wall was opened; not a brick of it had fallen. But, as a snare had been laid for Babylon, so also *it was taken, and it was not aware;*² *it was found and also caught, for it had striven against the Lord. How is the praise of the whole earth surprised! For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness; and thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; therefore shall evil come upon thee, and thou shalt not know from whence it ariseth; and mischief shall fall upon thee, and thou shalt not be able to put it off, &c.*—*None shall save thee.*

In their heat I will make their feasts, and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the Lord. I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter, &c. I will make drunk her princes and her wise men; her captains and her rulers, and her mighty men, and they shall sleep a perpetual

¹ Herod. lib. i. c. cxci.

² Grotius, Jackson, Poole, &c.

*sleep,*¹ &c. Cyrus, having purposely chosen, for the execution of his plan, the time of a great annual Babylonish festival, stimulated his assembled troops to enter the city, because, in that night of general revel within the walls, many of them were asleep, many drunk, and confusion universally prevailed. On passing, without obstruction or hindrance, into the city, the Persians slaying some, putting others to flight, and joining with the revellers as if slaughter had been merriment, hastened by the shortest way to the palace, and reached it ere yet a messenger had told the king that the city was taken. The gates of the palace, which was strongly fortified, were shut. The guards stationed before them were *drinking* beside a blazing light, when the Persians rushed impetuously upon them. The louder and altered clamour, no longer joyous, caught the ear of the inmates of the palace, and the bright light showed them the work of destruction, without revealing its cause. And *not aware* of the presence of an enemy in the midst of Babylon, the king himself, excited by the warlike tumults at the gates, commanded those within to examine from whence it arose; and according to the same word, by which *the gates* (leading from the river to the city) *were not shut, the loins of kings were loosed to OPEN before Cyrus the two-leaved gates.* At the first sight of the opened gates of the palace of Babylon, the eager Persians sprang in. *The king of Babylon heard the report of them—anguish took hold of him,—h: and all who were about him perished: God had numbered his kingdom and finished it: it was divided and given to the Medes and Persians; the lives of the Babylonian princes, and lords, and rulers, and captains, closed with that night's festival: the drunken slept a perpetual sleep, and did not wake.*²

¹ Grotius, Jackson, Poole, &c.

² Herod. lib. i. c. cxci. Xen. Cyr. lib. vii. c. v. pp. 430, 434.

Cyrus' brief address to his generals before marching into Babylon, concluded, as recorded by Xenophon, in these remarkable words: "Go, seize your arms; and together with the gods, I will lead you on (*ἡγησομαι*). Do ye, said he, Gادات and Gobryas, show us the ways, for ye know them; and, once entered, advance with the utmost expedition to the palace." The speed of the conqueror and of the avenger of blood, outstripped that of the running messenger of misfortune. Gobryas, formerly an injured vassal of the king of Babylon, pressed on with those about him, not without the hope that on such a night, while unguarded revelry reigned universally in the city, the gates of the palace, like those of the river, might be open. But though their hopes were vain, and the palace gates were shut, and a double wall surrounded it, yet the gates were opened, and when the palace was taken, and the king and his nobles slain, the castles were delivered up,¹ and Cyrus, in a single night, was master of Babylon. *I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight.*

To mask their purpose, the invading host mimicked the shouting, as their leaders knew the customs of the intemperate and frantic crowd, through whom they passed, or whom they slew. And it was from the warlike and tumultuous noise,² exceeding the obstreperous mirth of drunken soldiery, around the palace and at the very gates, that the two-leaved gates were opened. *Shout against her round about. Their voice shall roar* (lit. sound, or make a tumultuous noise,) *like the sea. The king of Babylon heard the report of them, &c.*

All her slain shall fall in the midst of her. The Babylonians would not go forth to fight. They mocked the enemy from their lofty walls, and defied danger from without, and dreaded it not within. In the siege, none of the

¹ Xen. *ibid.* p. 440.

² *Ibid.* p. 438.

Babylonians fell—but in the city, even in the *midst of it* they were slain. There the palace was situated and the guards were stationed, and in the very *midst of it* the soldiery of Babylon were massacred; the men of war were affrighted, and then, together with the king, his princes and lords, were there *slain*.

She hath been proud against the Lord, against the Holy One of Israel: therefore shall her young men fall in THE STREETS, and all her men of war shall be cut off in that day. Cyrus sent troops of horse throughout the streets, with orders to slay all who were found there. And he commanded proclamation to be made, in the Syrian language, that all who were in the houses should remain within; and that, if any one were found abroad, he should be killed. These orders were obeyed.¹ *Every one that is found shall be thrust through, &c. They shall wander every man to his quarter.*

I will fill thee with men as with caterpillars. Not only did the Persian army enter with ease as caterpillars, together with all the nations that had come up against Babylon, but they seemed also as numerous. Cyrus, after the capture of the city, made a great display of his cavalry in the presence of the Babylonians, and in the midst of Babylon. Four thousand guards stood before the palace gates, and two thousand on each side. These advanced as Cyrus approached; two thousand spearmen followed them. These were succeeded by four square masses of Persian cavalry, each consisting of ten thousand men; and to these again were added, in their order, the Median, Armenian, Hyrcanian, Caducian, and Sacian horsemen,—*all as before riding upon horses, every man in array*—with lines of chariots four abreast, concluding the train of the numerous hosts.² Cyrus afterwards reviewed, at Babylon, the whole

¹ Xen. Cyr. *ibid.* p. 439.

² *Ibid.* lib. viii. c. iii. pp. 494, 495.

of his army, consisting of one hundred and twenty thousand horse, two thousand chariots, and six hundred thousand foot.¹ Babylon, which was taken when not aware, and within whose walls no enemy, except a captive, had been ever seen, was also *filled with men as with caterpillars*, as if there had not been a wall around it. The Scriptures do not relate the manner in which Babylon was taken, nor do they ever allude to the exact fulfilment of the prophecies. But there is, in every particular, a strict coincidence between the predictions of the prophets and the historical narratives both of Herodotus and Xenophon.

On taking Babylon suddenly, and by surprise, Cyrus, as had been literally prophesied concerning him, and as the sign by which it was to be known that the Lord had called him by his name, (Isa. xlv. 1-4²) became immediately possessed of the most secret treasures of Babylon. No enemy had ever dared to rise up against that great city. To take it, seemed not a work for man to attempt; but it became the easy prey of him who was called *the servant of the Lord*. And as at this day,—from the perfect representation given by the prophets, of every feature of fallen Babylon, now at last utterly desolate,—men may know that God is the Lord, seeing that all who have visited and describe it, show that the predicted judgments against it have been literally fulfilled; so at that time, Cyrus—who, for two years, could only look on the outer side of the outer wall of Babylon, and who had begun to despair of reducing it by famine,—was to know by the *treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places being given into his*

¹ Xen. Cyr. c. vi. p. 532.

² Isaiah prophesied above one hundred and sixty years before the taking of Babylon, two hundred and fifty years before Herodotus, and nearly three hundred and fifty years before Xenophon. See Bishop Newton.—Josephus states that this prophecy was delivered by Isaiah two hundred and ten years before the taking of Babylon. Isaiah prophesied, B. C. 760–798. Babylon was taken by Cyrus, B. C. 538. Herodotus was born about 484 B. C., and Xenophon 349.

hand, that the Lord which had called him by his name, was the God of Israel. And when the appointed time had come that the power of their oppressor was to be broken, Babylon was taken; and when the similarly prescribed period of the captivity of the Jews, for whose sake he was called, had expired, Cyrus was their deliverer.

Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to SUBDUE NATIONS before him. Cyrus commencing his career with a small army of Persians, not only succeeded to the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, first united under him, but the Hyrcanians yielded also voluntarily to his authority. He subdued the Syrians, Assyrians, Cappadocians, both Phrygias, the Lydians, Carians, Phœnicians, and Babylonians. He governed the Bactrians, Indians, and Cilicians, and also the Sacians, Paphlagonians, and Mariandinians, and other nations. He likewise reduced to his authority the Greeks that were in Asia, and the Cyprians, and the Egyptians.¹ *Nations were thus subdued before him.*

I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it. He who was called the anointed of the Lord was free from covetousness. His character is drawn by Xenophon, (who states that he excelled all other kings,) as the model of a wise and generous prince. The liberality of Cyrus was more noble than the mere possession of immensity of wealth, though including both the riches of Cræsus and the treasures of Babylon. He reckoned that his riches belonged not any more to himself than to his friends.² And he made as well as pronounced it his object to use and not to hoard his wealth, and to apply it to the reward of his servants, and in relief of their wants. So *little* did he regard silver or delight in gold, that Cræsus told him

¹ Xen. Cyr. lib. i. pp. 4, 5.

² Ib. lib. viii. c. iv. p. 516.

that, by his liberality, he would make himself poor, instead of storing up vast treasures to himself. The Medes possessed, in this respect, the spirit of their chief, of which an instance, recorded by Xenophon, is too striking and appropriate to be passed over.¹ When Gobryas, an Assyrian governor, whose son the king of Babylon had slain, hospitably entertained him and his army, Cyrus appealed to the chiefs of the Medes and Hyrcanians, and to the noblest and most honourable of the Persians, whether giving first what was due unto the gods, and leaving to the rest of the army their portion, they would not overmatch his generosity by ceding to him their whole share of the first and plentiful booty which they had won from the land of Babylon. Loudly applauding the proposal, they immediately and unanimously consented; and one of them said, "Gobryas may have thought us poor, because we came not loaded with golden coins,² and drink not out of golden cups; but by this he will know, that men can be generous even without gold."³ *As for gold, they did not delight in it.*

Gobryas, it may be presumed, was stirred up and prepared, by gratitude on the one hand, as well as by revenge on the other, to go up against Babylon. And, it may be mentioned, he was afterwards the first to lead the way to the palace; and—for, though a great deep, the judgments of God are altogether righteous,—his hand was among those who slew the murderer of his son.

While such abundant illustrations of the truth of prophecy in respect to the siege of Babylon are before us, it may be specially noted, that there is not any other king or conqueror in ancient history, or even in Christian times, whose character, in the union of a noble disinterestedness and nobler self-denial, and of a sound because moral policy,

¹ Xen. Cyr. lib. viii. c. ii. p. 482.

² Darics.

³ Xen. lib. v. p. 289.

and of an integrity which casts the conduct of many others into the shade, and of forbearance and generosity toward conquered enemies, the Babylonians excepted, ever surpassed that of Cyrus, as drawn or described by profane historians. By some it has indeed been deemed, we think unjustly, as in part a fiction, even because of its very excellence. But the description is given by a heathen, which tallies so closely with the word of the prophet. *Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus—I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways.*¹

And it is immediately added by the prophet—he *shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of Hosts.*² And assuredly he was the man who first set forth the decree for the restoration of the Jews and the rebuilding of the temple. And far from acting thus, either for price or reward, he commanded the generals and governors in the vicinity of Judea, to supply the Jews with gold and silver, for the building of the temple and beasts for sacrifice, which accordingly they did.³

Cyrus, thus called by name,—a hundred and twenty years, as recorded by Josephus, before the destruction of the temple,—to the execution, in its appointed time, of the Lord's purpose of restoring the captive Jews and giving commandment for the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem, issued his decree to that effect, in the full knowledge, as related by the Jewish historian, of the prophecy of Isaiah, after the seventy years' captivity had expired. Scriptural history bears, "In the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith

¹ Isaiah xlv. 1, 13.

² Isaiah xlv. 13.

³ Jos. Ant. lib. xi. c. i. sect. 2, 3.

Cyrus, king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.”¹ The words of the decree, or writing, are recorded by Josephus, which bear, that the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, had given him all the kingdoms of the earth, (*της οικουμένης αποδειξε βασιλεια*).² In profane history it is related, in like manner, that Cyrus was the founder of the Persian empire,—the second great monarchy or universal empire, after the fall of the Babylonian. Arrian, Strabo, and Plutarch give the inscription on the tomb of Cyrus,—which was visited by Alexander the Great, the subverter of the Persian empire; “O mortal, I am Cyrus, the son of Cambyses, who founded the Persian empire and *ruled over Asia*, do not envy me a monument.” The name of Cyrus in the prophetic record, is far more enduring than any monument of marble or of brass. And he who thus executed the counsel of the Lord, was no subordinate ruler, but a mighty king, the conqueror of *nations*, and the liberator of the Jews.

Such, as Herodotus states, was the first conquest; such the first conqueror of Babylon: and such the prophetic history of both.

NONE SHALL RETURN IN VAIN. The walls of Babylon were incomparably the loftiest and the strongest ever built by man. They were constructed of such stupendous size and strength, on very purpose that no possibility might exist of Babylon ever being taken. And, if ever confidence in bulwarks could not have been misplaced, it was when the citizens and soldiery of Babylon, who feared to encounter their enemies in the field,—in perfect assurance of their safety, and beyond the reach of the Parthian arrow, scoffed, from the summit of their impregnable walls, the hosts which encompassed them. But though the proud boast of a city

¹ Ezra i. 1, 2. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23.

² Ant. xi. 1.

so defended, and which had never been taken—that it would *stand for ever*,—seemed scarcely presumptuous; yet, subsequently to the delivery of the prophecies concerning it, Babylon was not only repeatedly taken, but was never once besieged in vain. Cyrus indeed departed, after he first appeared before its walls, but he went to *prepare and gather together the nations against it*. And he did *not return in vain*. But this prediction, as it is applicable also to all others, is true, not of him only, but also of all who, in after-ages, came up against Babylon. It fell before every hand that was raised against it. Yet its greatness did not depart, nor was its glory obscured in a day. Cyrus was not its destroyer; but he sought by wise institutions to perpetuate its pre-eminence among the nations. He left it to his successor in all its strength and magnificence. Rebelling against Darius, the Babylonians made preparations for a siege, and bade defiance to the whole power of the Persian empire. Fully resolved not to yield, and that famine might never reduce them to submission, they adopted the most desperate and barbarous resolution of putting every woman in the city to death, with the exception of their mothers, and one female, the best beloved in every family, to bake their bread. All the rest were *assembled together*, and strangled.¹ *These two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection, for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments. For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness, &c.* They did come upon them in their perfection, when their wives and children were strangled by their own hands; and so suddenly, as before, *in a moment in one day, did these things come upon them*, that the victims were assembled for the sacrifice; so general was the instant *widowhood*, that fifty thousand

¹ Herod. lib. iii. c. cl. tom. iii. 160, edit. Foul.—See Prideaux, Bishop Newton.

women were afterwards taken, in proportionate numbers, from the different neighbouring provinces of the empire, to replace those who had been slain ; and the very reservation of their mothers multiplied the lamentations for the *loss of children*. But *trust in their wickedness* brought them no safety. For, while they were thus instrumental in the infliction of one grievous judgment, for which such murderers were ripe, their iniquity was not thereby lessened ; and therefore, at however great a price, they procured not any security against another judgment, which also had been denounced against Babylon for its wickedness. They deemed themselves absolutely secure against famine and against assault. The artifice of Cyrus could not again be a snare ; and an attempt to renew it was, along with every other, entirely frustrated. But still it was *not in vain* that Darius besieged Babylon.

In the twentieth month of the siege a single Persian, whose body was covered over with the marks of stripes and with blood, and whose nose and ears had been newly cut off, presented himself at one of the gates of Babylon,—a helpless object of pity, and, if not a great criminal indeed, the obvious victim of wanton and savage cruelty. He had fled, or escaped, from the camp of the enemy. But he was not a common deserter, such as they might not have admitted within their walls,—but it was Zopyrus, who was well known as one of the chief nobles of Persia. He represented to the Babylonians, that, not for any crime, but for the honest advice which he had given to Darius to raise the siege, as the taking of the city seemed to all impossible, the enraged tyrant (his pride wounded, or his fears perhaps awakened, that his army would be discouraged by such counsel) had inflicted upon him the severest cruelties, caused him to be mutilated as they saw, and to be scourged, of which his whole body bore the marks ;—to one of his

proud spirit and high rank, disgrace was worse than suffering, and he came to join the revolvers, his soul burning for vengeance against their common tyrant. "And now," addressing them, he said, "I come for the greatest good to you, for the greatest evil to Darius, to his army, and to the Persians. The injuries which I have suffered shall not be unrevenged, for I know, and will disclose all his designs."

On such proofs, and cheered by such hopes, the Babylonians did not doubt the sincerity of Zopyrus nor his devotion to their cause, identified, as it clearly seemed, with the only hope of revenge against the cruel author of his wrongs, towards whom they could not conceive but that he would cherish an inflexible hatred. He sought but to fight against their enemies. At his request, they gladly and unhesitatingly intrusted him with a military command. Forgiveness of injuries was not then reckoned a virtue—which it is too seldom practically accounted even in a Christian land; and vengeance, still called honour, sleeps not in an unforgiving breast. Zopyrus soon satisfied the Babylonians that his wrongs would not long be unavenged. To their delight, having watched the first opportunity, he sallied forth from the gate of Semiramis, on the tenth day after his entrance into the city, and falling suddenly on a thousand of the enemy, slew them every one. After an interval of only seven days, twice that number were, in like manner, slain, near to the Ninian gates. The men of Babylon were animated with new vigour and new hopes; and the praise of Zopyrus was on every tongue. He received a higher command. But the Persians, seemingly more wary, were nowhere open to attack for the space of twenty days. On the expiration of that period, however, Zopyrus, by a noted exploit, again proved himself worthy of still greater authority, by leading out his troops from the Chaldean gates, and killing, in one spot, four thousand men.

In reward for such services, and such tried fidelity, skill, and courage, as none, they thought, could be more worthy of the honour and of the trust, they not only raised him to the chief command of their army, but appointed him to the dignified and most responsible office in Babylon, which it was his aim to attain, that of (τειχοφυλάξ) guardian of their walls.¹

Darius, as if to be secure against the continued repetition of such desultory carnage of his troops, advanced with all his army to the walls. They were manned to repel the assault. But the treachery of Zopyrus, however incredible, and unknown and unsuspected, alike by the Babylonians and the Persians, became immediately apparent. Intrusted as he was, in virtue of his office, with the gates of the city, no sooner had the enemy approached, and the armed citizens ascended the walls, than he opened the Belidian and the Cissian gates, close to which the choicest Persian troops were stationed. The whole scheme was a preconcerted *snare*, known only to Darius and Zopyrus, and invented solely by the latter, the mutilation of whose body was his own voluntary act. To the glory of the deed were added the greatest gifts and honours, and the governorship of Babylon without tribute, for his reward. The numbers of the different detachments of the Persian troops who fell, their positions, and the precise time of their successive advancements, had all been resolved on and arranged.² And Darius as freely sacrificed the lives of seven thousand men, as Zopyrus had inflicted incurable wounds upon himself. "Thus," says Herodotus, "was Babylon a second time taken." And thus was the word of God,—from whom nothing past, present, or future can be hid,—a second time fulfilled against Babylon—*none shall return in vain*.

Babylon was a third time taken by Alexander the Great.

¹ Herod. c. clii.—clvii. pp. 166-173.

² Ibid. c. clviii. clix.

Mazæus, the Persian general, surrendered the city into his hands, and he entered it with his army drawn up, "as if they were marching to battle."¹ Again was it *filled with men*,—and literally was every man *put in array, like a man to the battle*. The siege of so fortified a city would have been a work of great difficulty and labour, even to the conqueror of Asia.² But the inhabitants eagerly flocked upon the walls to see their new king, and exchanged, without a struggle, the Persian for the Macedonian yoke. Babylon was afterwards successively taken by Antigonos, by Demetrius, by Antiochus the Great, and by the Parthians. But whatever king or nation came up against it, *NONE returned in vain*.

Each step in the progress of the decline of Babylon was the accomplishment of a prophecy. Conquered, for the first time,³ by Cyrus, it was afterwards reduced from an imperial to a tributary city. *Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground: there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans*.—After the Babylonians rebelled against Darius, the walls were reduced in height, and all the gates destroyed.⁴ *The wall of Babylon shall fall, her walls are thrown down*.—Xerxes, after his ignominious retreat from Greece, rifled the temples of Babylon,⁵ in which the golden images alone were estimated at £20,000,000, beside treasures of vast amount. *I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he has swallowed up; I will do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon*.⁶—Alexander the

¹ "Quadrato agmine, quod ipse ducebat, *velut in aciem irent*, ingredi suos jubet." (Quint. Curt. lib. v. c. ii.)

² "Tam munitæ urbis." (Ibid.)

³ Herod. lib. i. c. xcxi. Lowth, Bishop Newton.

⁴ Ibid. lib. iii. c. cl. Calmet, &c.

⁵ Ibid. lib. i. c. clxxxiii. Arrian. de Expeditione Alex. lib. vii. c. xvii. Prideaux, Lowth, Bishop Newton.

⁶ Jer. li. 44, 47, 52.

Great attempted to restore it to its former glory, and designed to make it the metropolis of a universal empire. But while the building of the temple of Belus, and the reparation of the embankments of the Euphrates, were actually carrying on, the conqueror of the world died, at the commencement of this his last undertaking, in the height of his power, and in the flower of his age.¹ *Take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed.*²—Patrocles, the governor of Babylon under Seleucus, one of the successors of Alexander, alarmed at the sudden and unexpected tidings, that his enemy Demetrius, with an army, was at hand, dared not, from the small number of his forces, wait his approach, ordered the Babylonians to leave the city and to “flee into the desert,”³ and, abandoning the city, sought protection for himself and for his troops from the marshes of the Euphrates rather than the walls of Babylon. On entering Babylon, though he had come up suddenly like the swelling of a river, Demetrius found “a deserted city.”⁴ *He shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan unto the habitation of the strong: but I will make them suddenly run away from her.*⁵

Babylon was soon resorted to again, but the vicinity of the city of Seleucia built on very purpose, as Pliny records,⁶ and as Christian writers have long remarked, tended greatly to its abandonment and decay, and was the chief cause of the decline of Babylon as a city, and drained it of a great part of its population. Ptolemy Euergetes, who extended his conquests beyond the Euphrates, carried with him into

¹ Arrian. lib. vii. c. xvii. Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 733. Ibid. Rollin.

² Jer. li. 8, 9.

³ φυγεῖν εἰς τὴν ἔρημον.

⁴ Βαβυλώνα τὴν πόλιν ἐκλελειωμένην εἶρε. Diod. Sic. tom. viii. lib. xix. pp. 423, 424.

⁵ Jer. l. 44.

⁶ In solitudinem rediit exhausta vicinitate Seleuciæ, ob id conditæ a Nicatore. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. vi. c. 36.

Egypt 2500 idols, some of which Cambyzes, who reigned at Babylon, had long before taken from the Egyptians.¹ At a later period, or 130 years before the Christian era, Phra-hates king of Parthia, as Justin relates, having marched against the Scythians who had begun to lay waste his territories, delegated his authority to one Himerus, a favourite on account of the beauty of his youth or childhood, who, forgetful of his former (condition of) life, and of his duty as deputy, grievously oppressed the Babylonians and other states.² Phra-hates was discomfited and slain by the Scythians, as was also his uncle and successor, Artabanus, soon after by the Thogarii; and his son Mithridates the Great immediately succeeded to the kingdom of Parthia. Diodorus Siculus, in seeming inadvertence, speaks of Eumerus or Humerus as king of Parthia; but mentions that he was an Hyrcanian by birth, and in a single passage or fragment, his description of the cruelties exercised by him against the Babylonians is rich in illustrations, and, conjoined with corroborative testimony, marks the continued progress of the prophetic judgments against Babylon. Exceeding in cruelty all known tyrants as Diodorus relates, he omitted no sort of punishment; for having enslaved many of the Babylonians even for any cause whatever, he was wont to send them away with all their households into Media, having given orders that their effects, or rather that they themselves should be sold as spoil. He also set fire to the forum of Babylon, and to some of the temples, and destroyed the fairest part of the city.³

There is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans; for

¹ Hieron. Tom. v. p. 706, in Dan. xi. 8.

² Phra-hates cum adversus eos proficisceretur, ad tutelam regni reliquit Himerum quandam, pueritiæ sibi flore conciliatum; qui tyrannica crudelitate, oblitus et vite præteritæ, et vicarii officii. Babylonios, multasque alias civitates importune vexavit. Justin, lib. xlii. p. 268.

³ Ὅτι Ἐυήμερος ὁ τῶν Παρθῶν βασιλεὺς, Ὑρκανίος ὡν το γένος, ὡμοτήτι δὲ ὑπερβαλλὼν πάντας τοὺς μνημνενομένους τυράννους, οὐκ ἔστιν ὅποιον τιμωρίας γένος ἀπέλιπε. Πολλοὺς δὲ τῶν

thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate. Take the millstones and grind meal, &c. This prophecy is thus interpreted by Grotius and Lowth, without any allusion to the actual fact of the servitude or slavery of the Babylonians—"Prepare yourself for servile offices."¹ "From being mistress of kingdoms thou shalt become a mean slave; thy captives shall be set to grind, which was reckoned the lowest degree of drudgery (see Exod. xi. 5; Judges xvi. 21), such was the *pistrinum*, or turning the mill among the Romans."² Himerus, the worst of tyrants, exercised every species of cruelty upon the Babylonians, and reduced many of them to actual slavery, and consequently to its meanest toils. *I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.*³

In suddenly *running away from her* at the approach of Demetrius, some of the inhabitants of Babylon left the Euphrates and fled to the desert, others *passed over the*

Βαβυλωνίων και ἐπὶ ταῖς τυχούσαις αἰτίαις πανοικίους ἐξανδραποδισαμένους εἰς τὴν Μήδιαν ἐξεπεμψε προσταγὰς λαφυροπολεῖν.* και της Βαβυλωνος την ἀγοραν, και τινα των ἱερων, ἐνέπηρσε, και το κρατιστον της πολως διεφθειρε. Diod. Sic. vol. x. p. 128. Translated as above. The preceding passage of Diodorus is quoted by Usher and Bishop Newton, &c., as descriptive of the desolation of Babylon and of the cruelties exercised against the Babylonians, without any specific reference to any special prediction. In the common Latin translation, which alone they quote, there is no mention whatever, as in the *original*, of the fact, that commandment was given by the tyrant that their spoils should be sold, or that the exiles, as spoil, should be set up for sale. But it is not unworthy of being noted; for Lowth, who does not refer to this testimony of Diodorus or to any similar facts whatever, thus gives the interpretation of the words of the prophecy, *Uncover thy locks, &c.* "Thy hairs shall hang about thy ears, without being dressed up or adorned with a diadem; thou shalt *lose all thy finery and those ornaments* in which thou didst pride thyself, as marks of thy state; and the persons of the greatest quality shall be *deposited of their gaiety, and CARRIED CAPTIVES in a mean and ragged condition.*" Such was the interpretation of an able commentator before the *fact* was applied to the prediction. And such is the confirmation which it receives, after the lapse of more than a century, from the words omitted by a translator, but which are to be found in the old as well as modern editions of Diodorus.

¹ Para te servilibus ministeriis. Grot. Isa. xlvii. 2.

² Lowth. Isa. xlvii. 2.

³ Isa. xlii. 11.

* Λαφυρα is a term which specially denotes the spoils taken from the *living*, as distinguished from σκυλα, or those of the dead. *Scap.* The compound word is otherwise used by Diodorus to denote that the *persons* of captives were sold *as spoil*, and thus implies that they were subjected to the lowest servitude and utmost spoliation.

Tigris into Susiana; and the intervening *rivers* and ditches, or marshy ground, over which they had to pass in their hasty retreat, were the best protection of the band that accompanied Patrocles. After reducing many of the Babylonians to bondage, Himerus banished them from Babylon into Media, which lay beyond *the Tigris and Choaspes and their tributary streams*: but first he commanded that they should be sold; and the rich and gay apparel of the proud daughter of Babylon, ill-suited to the wandering exiles, did not any longer befit their station or their toils. The mandates of those who at different times had been *appointed over her*, were obeyed; but it had long before been written concerning the daughter of the Chaldeans, *uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers, &c. Thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever: so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it.*¹

The temples of Babylon were rifled of their *idols* by Xerxes the king of Persia, till the *weight* of these in gold amounted to 400,000 pounds. Ptolemy Euergetes having extended his conquests beyond the Euphrates, took with him from the conquered provinces, on his sudden recall and hasty return into Egypt, 2500 *idols*, some of which Cambyses the son of Cyrus, who reigned at Babylon, had previously taken from the Egyptians. When Babylon was *exhausted* by Seleucia, forty miles distant, and many of the Babylonians removed to that city; and also when many of them at a later period were commanded, together with all their households (*πανοικίους*), to depart to Media—it may be presumed that their household gods, though a hindrance rather than a help, thus formed, time after time, a portion of their household effects; and that when their temples were finally burned, many of the *idols* were carried away by the

¹ Isa. xlvii. 2, 3, 7.

idolatrous Babylonians, condemned to perpetual slavery and banishment, in their weary pilgrimage to the far distant land of their enemies. And thus it was written: *Their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle, your carriages were heavy loaden; they are a burden to the weary beast. They stoop; they bow down together; they could not deliver the burden;*

*But themselves are gone into captivity.*¹ Media, from the first, was called to besiege Babylon; for the device of the Lord was against Babylon to destroy it. And in *the latter end*, 308 years after the siege, and 582 years after the date of the prophecy, the enslaved Babylonians did go to Media *into captivity*.

Himerus, an Hyrcanian by birth, was but a youth, if not a boy, the floridness of whose *juvenile* looks (*flore pueritiæ*) was, together with the casual absence of the king, the cause of his sudden elevation to that power which, forgetful of his former state, he so greatly abused as to excel all tyrants in cruelty. And while the full measure of his severities, of which none were omitted, was the cup of indignation prepared for the Babylonians, it may be said also of him,—*Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out; surely he shall make their habitation desolate with them.*² His youth, and elevation to power from such a cause, may mark him out as *the least of the flock*; and in fulfilling the counsel that the Lord had taken against Babylon, *surely he at once drew them out, and made their habitation desolate with them.*

He sent them forth from Babylon, together with all their households; many of the Babylonians had previously removed with all their effects to Seleucia—*They shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast.*³

The temple of Belus, first built to bind the human race to the plains of Shinar, and the other temples of their gods,

¹ Isa. xlv. 1, 2.

² Jer. l. 45.

³ Jer. l. 3.

and many of their fine houses, while yet undemolished, may have long tended to keep the lingering Babylonians within the precincts of the devoted city. But the judgment of God rested on the most magnificent of their temples, as well as on the proud idolaters and their senseless idols: and the soothsayers, the star-gazers, and the monthly prognosticators, could not stand up and save them from the things that were to come upon them; and the time was come when the temples of the Babylonians could no longer be their trust or their resort, and when their efforts to save them or their habitations would be in vain. For it is expressly related that Himerus set fire to the forum and some of the temples, and destroyed the fairest part of the city—*Behold they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame.*¹ *The people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary.*² *Bel boweth down; Nebo stoopeth; I will punish Bel in Babylon;—and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him.*³

*It is the vengeance of the Lord: take vengeance upon her; as she hath done, do unto her.*⁴—*Woe unto them! for their day is come, the time of their visitation. The voice of them that flee and escape out of the land of Babylon, to declare in Zion the vengeance of the Lord our God, the vengeance of his temple—Recompense her according to her work; according to all that she hath done, do unto her: for she hath been proud against the Lord, against the Holy One of Israel.*⁵—*I will render unto Babylon, and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea, all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith the Lord—The Lord God of recompences shall surely requite.*⁶ The facts relative to the siege of Jerusalem and the captivity of the Jews, thus take the

¹ Isa. xlvii. 13, 14.

² Jer. li. 58.

³ Isa. xlvii. 1; Jer. li. 44.

⁴ Jer. l. 15.

⁵ Jer. l. 27, 28, 29.

⁶ Jer. li. 24, 56.

place of predictions ; and a parallel may at length be drawn between what the Babylonians did, and what they suffered.

*Bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon came up against Judah to destroy it.*¹ And so soon as the time of recompences began, an assembly of great nations gathered together out of all the countries from Egypt to the bounds of the Caspian, and from Lydia to the Persian Gulph, came up against Babylon.

*Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it; and they built forts against it round about, and the city was besieged.*² Cyrus, having prepared the nations against Babylon, encamped against it round about, built forts against it,³ and laid siege to the city, which had long been the terror of the nations.

*The Chaldeans took Zedekiah, the king of Judah, and gave judgment upon him, and slew his sons THE PRINCES OF JUDAH before his eyes; and the captain of the Babylonish guard took the chief priest and the second priest, and the officer that was set over the men of war, and five men of them that were in the king's presence, and the principal scribe, which mustered the people of the land, and threescore others, and brought them to the king of Babylon, and the king of Babylon smote them and slew them.*⁴ And in the night in which Babylon was taken, the king, together with many of his nobles, was slain. Nor was the slaughter of the chief rulers of Israel left unavenged, when Darius, as Herodotus relates, impaled 3000 of the chief nobility of Babylon.⁵

All the army of the Chaldees brake down the walls of

¹ 2 Kings xxiv. 2.

² 2 Kings xxv. 1, 2.

³ Xen. Cyr. lib. vii. c. v. p. 433.

⁴ 2 Kings xxv. 6, 7, 18-21.

⁵ Ὁ Δαρείος τῶν ἀνδρῶν τοὺς κορυφαίους μαλίστα ἐς τρισχίλιους ἀνεσκόπησε.

Jerusalem round about,¹ and thus Darius brake down the wall of Babylon.

*Nebuchadnezzar carried of the vessels of the house of the Lord to Babylon, and put them in his temple at Babylon—and all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes: all these he brought to Babylon.*²—The treasures of the temple of Belus became the property of Cyrus, and Darius and Xerxes, devoted Magians or worshippers of fire, began and carried on against it the revenges of the temple of Jerusalem, till all its treasures were exhausted, and all its idols broken, and all that Bel had swallowed up was brought forth out of his mouth.

*Nebuzar-adan, a captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came unto Jerusalem: and he burnt the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and EVERY GREAT MAN'S HOUSE BURNT HE WITH FIRE.*³ Himerus, a deputy and servant of the king of Parthia, set fire to the forum and some of the temples of Babylon, and destroyed the best or fairest parts of the city.

*The people (of Judah) transgressed very much, they mocked the messengers of God—therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, and he gave ALL into his hand.*⁴ The captive Jews were servants to Nebuchadnezzar and his sons. The poorest only of the people of the land were left to be vine-dressers and husbandmen, and to serve the king of Babylon. And when the conquerors became the conquered, Cyrus held *all the property and the persons* of the Babylonians, as given unto him.⁵ Having taken Babylon, Cyrus commanded the Babylonians, on pain of death, to deliver up their arms; enacted that they should cultivate the land, and pay tribute, and serve those to whom they were respec-

¹ 2 Kings xxv. 10.

² 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7, 18.

³ 2 Kings xxv. 8, 9.

⁴ 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14, 16, 17.

⁵ Jer. lii. 16. Xen. Cyr. lib. vii. c. v. pp. 440, 441.

tively given, and he ordered the Persians, and their allies, to speak as masters or lords to those whom they had received.¹ Addressing his assembled chiefs, he maintained that all were theirs by right of conquest, as by an eternal law, and that they had entered into the possession of a large and fertile country, and of *a people to cultivate it for their use*. Successive rulers held them in the same dependent state, and revolt from oppression finally entailed a *servitude* as heavy and grievous as that which they had formerly exacted.

The Babylonians had made the Jews to *serve in a hard bondage, and showed them no mercy, but laid their yoke very heavily upon them*.² Cyrus reduced the Babylonians to the most abject state, to secure their submission.³ Darius after their rebellion tyrannised over them more cruelly than before. The cruelties exercised by the idolaters against the worshippers of the God of Israel were retaliated on themselves by the worshippers of fire, and enemies of idolatry. And while *no mercy was shown unto Israel*, Himerus, excelling all known tyrants in cruelties, exercised them all, and *omitted no sort of punishment*, or showed *no mercy* to the inhabitants of Babylon.

Babylon that led Judah captive, and *smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, and that ruled the nations in anger*, became the victim of the wrath it had provoked, and was smitten with a continual stroke, and long continued to be the threshing-floor of the nations, though 400 years had elapsed from its subjection to Cyrus till its enslaved citizens, in token of the vengeance of the temple of the Lord, went forth into captivity dazzled and distressed by the blaze of the temples of Babylon.

The "golden city," which once triumphed over Jerusalem,

¹ Xen. Cyr. lib. vii. pp. 452, 453.

² Isa. xiv. 3. Ib. xlvii. 6.

³ Xen. Cyr. lib. vii. p. 451.

thus gradually verged, for centuries, towards poverty and desolation.—Notwithstanding that Cyrus resided chiefly at Babylon, and sought to reform the government and remodel the manners of the Babylonians, the succeeding kings of Persia preferred, as the seat of empire, Susa, Persepolis, or Ecbatana, situated in their *own country*; and in like manner the successors of Alexander did not attempt to complete his purpose of restoring Babylon to its pre-eminence and glory; but, after the subdivision of his mighty empire, the very kings of Assyria, during their temporary residence even in Chaldea, deserted Babylon, and dwelt in Seleucia. And thus the foreign inhabitants, first Persians, and afterwards Greeks, imitating their sovereigns by deserting Babylon, acted as if they verily had said,—*Forsake her, and let us go every man into his own country: for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies. Babylon shall be as the chased roe, and as a sheep that no man taketh up; they shall every man turn to his own people, and flee every one into his own land.*

Babylon laid Jerusalem *in heaps*, and Babylon lies in heaps to this day.

SECTION II.

THE LAND OF CHALDEA.

Kindred judgments—the issue of common crimes—rested on the land of Chaldea, as well as on its doomed metropolis; and the tracing of their fulfilment may best lead to the view of the utter desolation of fallen Babylon.

They come from a far country, from the end of the earth, to destroy the whole land. Many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also, &c. The Persians, the Macedonians, the Parthians, the Romans, the Saracens, and

the Turks, are the chief of the many nations who have unscrupulously and unsparingly served themselves of the land of the Chaldeans: and Cyrus and Darius, kings of Persia; Alexander the Great, and Seleucus, king of Assyria; Demetrius and Antiochus the Great; Trajan, Severus, Julian, and Heraclius, emperors of Rome; the victorious Omar, the successor of Mohammed; and Holagou and Tamerlane, are *great kings*, who successively subdued or desolated Chaldea, or exacted from it tribute to such an extent, as scarcely any other country ever paid to a single conqueror. And, though the names of some of these nations were unknown to the Babylonians, and unheard of in the world at the time of the prophecy, most of these many nations and great kings need now but to be named, to show that, in local relation to Chaldea, *they came from the utmost border, from the coasts of the earth.*

They are CRUEL both in ANGER and fierce wrath to lay the land DESOLATE, &c. The Persians vied with the Parthians in cruelty and fierceness against resisting and against subjugated enemies. Three thousand Babylonians were at once impaled by order of Darius. Conquest was the object, and kindness was not in the nature of the Macedonian conquerors of Babylon. The possession of Chaldea was contested between Antigonus and Seleucus, and *ruler rose against ruler.* After its long subjection to the Seleucidæ, the proverbially cruel Parthians held Babylonia in bondage. In the second century of the Christian era, the Romans, *coming from afar*, still maintained the character of the cruel and fierce desolaters of Chaldea, and were thus the unconscious instruments of the fulfilment of other prophecies. "Under the reign of Marcus, the Roman generals penetrated *as far as* Ctesiphon and Seleucia. They were received as friends by the Greek colony; they attacked as enemies the seat of the Parthian kings, yet both cities expe-

rienced the same treatment. The sack and conflagration of Seleucia, *with the massacre of three hundred thousand of the inhabitants*, tarnished the glory of the Roman triumph. Seleucia sunk under the fatal blow; but Ctesiphon, in about thirty-three years, had sufficiently recovered its strength to maintain an obstinate siege against the Emperor Severus.”¹ Ctesiphon was thrice besieged and thrice taken by the predecessors of Julian. And when attacked by Julian the *anger* of that Roman emperor and that of his army was not moderated, nor their *cruelty* abated, by the effectual resistance of the citizens of Ctesiphon against sixty thousand besiegers. “The fields of Assyria were devoted by Julian to the calamities of war; and the philosopher retaliated on a guiltless people the acts of rapine and cruelty which had been committed by their haughty master in the Roman provinces,—the Persians beheld from the walls of Ctesiphon *the desolation* of the adjacent country.”² With such violence did he wreak his vengeance on the *inhabitants of Chaldea*, that their *fierce wrath* was conjoined with the *cruelty* of their enemies *to lay the land desolate*. “The extensive region that lies between the river Tigris and the mountains of Media, was filled with villages and towns; and the fertile soil, for the most part, was in a very improved state of cultivation.—But on the approach of the Romans, this rich and smiling prospect was instantly blasted. Wherever they moved, the inhabitants deserted the open villages, and took shelter in the fortified towns; the cattle were driven away; the grass and ripe corn were *consumed with FIRE*; and as soon as the *flames* had subsided which interrupted the march of Julian, he beheld the melancholy face of a SMOKING AND NAKED DESERT.”³ But “the second city of the province, large, populous, and well fortified,” in vain resisted a fierce

¹ Gibbon, vol. i. c. viii. p. 333.

² Ibid. vol. iv. c. xxiv. pp. 169, 185.

³ Ibid. pp. 191, 192.

and desperate assault; and a large breach having been made by a battering-ram in the walls, the "soldiers of Julian rushed *impetuously* into the town, and after the full gratification of every military appetite, Perisabor was REDUCED TO ASHES; and the engines which assaulted the citadel were planted on the *ruins of the smoking houses*."¹ When, in after-ages, the Romans, under Heraclius, penetrated to the royal seat of Destagered, and spread over Chaldea to the gates of Ctesiphon, "whatever could not be easily transported, *they consumed with fire*, that Chosroes might feel the *anguish* of those wounds which he had so often inflicted on the provinces of the empire; and justice might allow the excuse," says Gibbon, "if the desolation had been confined to the works of regal luxury, if national *hatred*, military licence, and religious zeal, had not wasted with *equal rage* the habitations and the temples of the guiltless subjects."² The fierce Abassides, proverbially reckless of committing murder, which was the very work that their missionaries went forth to execute, long reigned over Chaldea; and Bagdad, its new capital, distant about fifteen miles from Seleucia and Ctesiphon, was their imperial seat for five hundred years.³ "Their daggers, their only arms, were broken by the sword of Holagou, and except the word *assassin*, *not a vestige is left of the enemies of mankind*,"⁴—for again and again has it proved true of the land of Chaldea—*I will destroy the sinners thereof out of it*. The Mogul Tartars succeeded as the guilty possessors and cruel desolaters of the *land* of Babylon. "Bagdad, after a siege of two months, was stormed and sacked by the Moguls, under Holagou Khan, the grandson of Ghengis Khan."⁵ And Tamerlane, another *great king*, "reduced to his obedience the whole course of the Tigris and Euphrates, from the mouth to the

¹ Gibbon, vol. iv. c. xxiv. p. 170.

² Ibid. vol. viii. c. xlv. p. 253.

³ Ibid. vol. x. c. lii. p. 35.

⁴ Ibid. vol. xi. c. lxiv. p. 417.

⁵ Ibid. vol. xi. c. lxiv. p. 418.

sources of these rivers; and he erected on the ruins of Bagdad a pyramid of ninety thousand heads.”¹ Finally, not with abated, but if possible, with increasing, or with more persevering cruelty, the Turks, aided by Saracens, Koords, and Tartars, have become *the weapons of the indignation of the Lord, brought forth out of his armoury which he hath opened; for—fearful as a token of judgment, and clear as the testimony of truth—this is the work of the Lord God of Hosts in the land of the Chaldeans.—Waste and utterly destroy after them. A sword is upon the Chaldeans. A sound of battle is in the land, and of great destruction. I will kindle a FIRE in his CITIES, and it shall DEVOUR ALL ROUND ABOUT HIM. A sound of great destruction cometh from the land of the Chaldeans.*

And Chaldea shall be a spoil; ALL that spoil her shall be SATISFIED, saith the Lord. Come against her from the utmost border, open her storehouses. A SWORD is upon her treasures, and they shall be robbed. O thou that dwellest upon many waters, ABUNDANT in treasures, thine end is come, and the measure of thy covetousness. On taking Babylon suddenly by surprise, Cyrus became immediately possessed of the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places. On his first publicly appearing in Babylon, all the officers of his army, both of the Persians and allies, according to his command, wore very splendid robes, those belonging to the superior officers being of various colours, all of the finest and brightest dye, and richly embroidered with gold and silver; and thus the hidden riches of secret places were openly displayed. And when the treasures of Babylon became the spoil of another great king, Alexander gave six minæ (about £15) to each Macedonian horseman; to each Macedonian soldier and foreign horseman, two minæ (£5); and to every other man in his army, a

¹ Gibbon, vol. xii. c. lxv. pp. 9–24.

donation equal to two months' pay. Demetrius ordered his soldiers to plunder the land of Babylon for *their own use*.¹ But it is not in these instances alone that Chaldea has been a spoil, and that *all* who spoil her have been *satisfied*. It was the abundance of her treasures which brought successive spoliators. Many nations came from afar, and though they *returned to their own country*, (as in formerly besieging Babylon, so in continuing to despoil the land of Chaldea,) *none returned in vain*. From the richness of the country new treasures were speedily stored up, till again *the sword came upon them, and they were robbed*. The prey of the Persians and of the Greeks for nearly two centuries after the death of Alexander, Chaldea became afterwards the prey chiefly of the Parthians, for an equal period, till a greater nation, the Romans, *came from the coasts of the earth* to pillage it. To be restrained from dominion and from plunder, was the exciting cause, and often the shameless plea, of the anger and fierce wrath of these famed but cruel conquerors of the world. Yet within the provinces of their empire, it was their practice, on the submission of the inhabitants, to protect and not to destroy. But Chaldea, from its extreme distance, never having yielded permanently to their yoke, and the limits of their empire having been fixed by Hadrian on the western side of the Euphrates, or on the very borders of Chaldea, that hapless country obtained not their protection, though repeatedly the scene of ruthless spoliation by the Romans. The authority of Gibbon, in elucidation of Scripture, cannot be here distrusted any more than of heathen historians. To use his words, "a hundred thousand captives, and a *rich booty*, rewarded the fatigues of the Roman soldiers,"² when Ctesiphon was taken, in the second century, by the Romans. "The city opened its gates to Cassius, the Roman general; but nevertheless

¹ Plutarch, Life of Demetrius.

² Gibbon, vol. i. c. viii. p. 334.

Cassius ordered the *inhabitants*, to the number of *four hundred thousand souls*, to be inhumanly massacred, and the city to be utterly demolished.”¹ Even Julian, who, in the fourth century, was forced to raise the siege of Ctesiphon, came not *in vain* to Chaldea, and *failed not to take of it a spoil*; nor, though an apostate, did he fail to verify by his acts the truth which he denied. After having given Perisabor to the flames, “the plentiful magazines of corn, of arms, and of splendid furniture, were partly distributed among the troops, and partly reserved for the public service; the *useless stores* were destroyed by *fire*, or thrown into the streams of the Euphrates.”² Having also rewarded his army with a hundred pieces of silver to each soldier, he thus stimulated them (when still dissatisfied) to fight for greater spoil—“Riches are the object of your desires; those riches are in the hands of the Persians; and the *spoils* of this fruitful country are proposed as the prize of your valour and discipline.”³ The enemy being defeated after an arduous conflict, “the *spoil* was such as might be expected from the riches and luxury of an Oriental camp; *large quantities of silver and gold*, splendid arms and trappings, and beds and tables of massy silver.”⁴

When the Romans, under Heraclius, ravaged Chaldea, “though much of the treasure had been removed from Des-tagered, and much had been expended, the *remaining wealth* appears to have *exceeded their hopes*, and even to have SATIATED their avarice.”⁵

While the deeds of Julian and the words of Gibbon show how Chaldea was *spoiled*—how a *sword* continued to be on her *treasures*—and how, *year after year*, and age after age, there was *rumour on rumour*, and *violence in her land*, and *that all that spoil her would be SATISFIED*—more full illustra-

¹ Universal Hist. vol. xv. p. 216.

² Gibbon, vol. iv. c. xxiv. p. 171.

³ Gibbon, p. 176.

⁴ Ibid. vol. iv. c. xxiv. p. 184.

⁵ Ibid. vol. viii. c. xlv. p. 252.

tions remain to be given of the truth of the same prophetic word. And as one painter of great power may cope with another, by drawing, as closely to the life as he, though the features be different, so Gibbon's description of the sack of Ctesiphon, as previously he had described the sack and conflagration of Seleucia, (cities, each of which may aptly be called "the daughter of Babylon," having been, like it, the capital of Chaldea,) is written as if, by the most graphic representation of facts, he had been aspiring to rival Volney as an illustrator of Scripture prophecy. "The capital was taken by assault; and the disorderly resistance of the people gave a keener edge to the *sabres* of the Moslems, who shouted with religious transport, 'This is the white palace of Chosroes; this is the promise of the apostle of God. The naked *robbers* of the desert were suddenly *enriched beyond the measure of their hope* or knowledge. Each chamber revealed a new *treasure*, *secreted* with art, or ostentatiously displayed; the *gold and silver*, the various wardrobes and precious furniture, surpassed (says Abulfeda) the estimate of fancy or numbers; and another historian defines the untold and almost infinite mass by the fabulous computation of three thousand of thousands of thousands of pieces of gold.—One of the apartments of the palace was decorated with a carpet of silk sixty cubits in length, and as many in breadth (90 feet); a paradise, or garden, was depicted on the ground; the flowers, fruits, and shrubs were imitated by the figures of the *gold* embroidery, and the colours of the *precious stones*; and the ample square was encircled by a variegated and verdant border. The rigid Omar *divided the prize* among his brethren of Medina; the picture was destroyed; but such was the intrinsic value of the materials, that the share of Ali alone was sold for 20,000 drachms. A mule that carried away the tiara and cuirass, the belt and bracelets of Chosroes, was overtaken by the pursuers; the gorgeous

trophy was presented to the commander of the faithful, and the gravest of his companions condescended to smile when they beheld the white beard, hairy arms, and uncouth figure of the veteran who was invested with the *spoil* of the *great king*.”¹

Recent evidence is not wanting to show, that, wherever a *treasure* is to be found, a sword, in the hand of a *fierce* enemy, is upon it, and spoliation has not ceased in the land of Chaldea.

“On the west of Hillah, there are two towns, which, in the eyes of the Persians and all the Shiites, are rendered sacred by the memory of two of the greatest martyrs of that sect. These are Meshed Ali and Meshed Housein, lately *filled with riches*, accumulated by the devotion of the Persians, but carried off by the *ferocious* Wahabees to the middle of their deserts.”²

And, after the incessant spoliation of ages, now that *the end is come* of the treasures of Chaldea, the earth itself fails not to disclose its *hidden treasures*, so as to testify that they once were *abundant*. In proof of this an instance may be given. At the ruins of Hoomania, near to those of Ctesiphon, pieces of silver having (on the 5th of March 1812) been accidentally discovered, edging out of the bank of the Tigris, “on examination, there were found and brought away,” by persons sent for that purpose by the pasha of Bagdad’s officers, “between six and seven hundred ingots of silver, each measuring from one to one and a half feet in length; and an earthen jar, containing upwards of two thousand Athenian coins, all of silver. Many were purchased at the time by the late Mr Rich, formerly the East India Company’s resident at Bagdad, and are now in his valuable collection, since bought by government, and deposited

¹ Gibbon, vol. ix. c. li. pp. 370, 371.

² Malte-Brun’s Geog. vol. ii. p. 119. Buckingham’s Travels in Mesopotamia, vol. ii. p. 246.

in the British Museum.”¹ Amidst the ruins of Ctesiphon, “the natives often pick up coins of gold, silver, and copper, for which they always find a ready sale in Bagdad. Indeed, some of the wealthy Turks and Armenians, who are collecting for several French and German consuls, hire people to go and search for coins, medals, and antique gems; and I am assured they never return to their employers empty-handed;”²—as if *all who spoil Chaldea shall be satisfied*, till even the ruins be spoiled unto the uttermost.

The past history of the land of the Chaldeans may be briefly closed in the language of prophecy; for the prophets in their visions saw it as it is; although historians knew not, even after its grandeur was partially gone, how to tell of its fertility, which they witnessed, and hope to be believed. Those who recorded *the word that the Lord spake against Babylon, and against the land of the Chaldeans*, had no such fear, though two thousand four hundred years have elapsed since they described what is now only at last to be seen.

I will punish the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations. Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest. A drought is on the waters, and they shall be dried up. Behold the hindermost of the nations, a dry land and a desert. Her cities are a desolation, a dry land and a wilderness, a land where no man dwelleth, neither doth son of man pass thereby. I will send unto Babylon fanners that shall fan her, and shall empty her land. The land shall tremble and sorrow; for every purpose of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant.

The land of the Chaldeans was to be made *perpetual* or long continued *desolations*.—Ravaged and spoiled for ages,

¹ Captain Mignan's Travels, p. 53.

² Ibid. p. 74.

the Chaldees' excellency finally disappeared, and the land became desolate, as still it remains. Rauwolff, who passed through it in 1574, describes the country as bare, and "so dry and barren that it cannot be tilled."¹ And the most recent travellers all concur in describing it in similar terms.

The land of Babylon was to be fanned and emptied—to be a dry land, a wilderness, and a desert, &c.—On the one side, near to the site of Opis, "the country all around appears to be one wide desert of sandy and barren soil, thinly scattered over with brushwood and tufts of reedy grass."² On the other, between Bussorah and Bagdad, "immediately on either bank of the Tigris, is the *untrodden desert*. The absence of all cultivation,—the sterile, arid, and wild character of the whole scene, formed a contrast to the rich and delightful accounts delineated in Scripture. The natives, in travelling over these *pathless deserts*, are compelled to explore their way by the stars."³ "The face of the country is open and flat, presenting to the eye one vast level plain where nothing is to be seen but here and there a herd of half-wild camels. This immense tract is very rarely diversified with any trees of moderate growth, but is an immense wild bounded only by the horizon."⁴ In the intermediate region, "the whole extent from the foot of the wall of Bagdad is a barren waste without a blade of vegetation of any description ;" on leaving the gates, the traveller has before him "the prospect of a bare *desert*,—a flat and barren country.—The whole country between Bagdad and Hillah is a perfectly flat and (with the exception of a few spots as you approach the latter place) *uncultivated waste*."⁵ "That

¹ Rauwolff's Travels, in Ray's Collection of Travels, 1693, p. 164.

² Buckingham's Travels in Mesopotamia, vol. ii. p. 155.

³ Mignan's Travels, p. 5.

⁴ Ibid. pp. 31, 32. Keppel's Nar. vol. i. p. 260. Buckingham's Travels, p. 242. Kinnier's Memoirs of Persia, p. 279.

⁵ Rich's Memoir, p. 4.

it was at some former period in a far different state, is evident from the number of canals by which it is traversed, now *dry* and neglected; and the quantity of heaps of earth covered with fragments of brick and broken tiles, which are seen in every direction,—the indisputable traces of former population. At present the only inhabitants of the tract are the Sobeide Arabs.”¹ “Around as far as the eye can reach, is a *trackless desert*.”² “The abundance of the country has vanished as clean away as if the ‘besom of destruction’ had swept it from north to south; the whole land from the outskirts of Babylon to the farthest stretch of sight lying a melancholy waste. *Not a habitable spot* appears for countless miles.”³ Bedouins traverse the desolated land of Babylon; and every man met with in the desert is looked on as an enemy. Wild beasts have now their home in the land of Chaldea; but the traveller is less afraid of them,—even of the lion,—than of “the wilder animal, the desert Arab.” The country is frequently “totally impassable.” “Those splendid accounts of the Babylonian lands, yielding crops of grain two or three hundred fold, compared with the modern face of the country, afford a remarkable proof of the *singular desolation* to which it has been subjected. The canals at present can only be traced by their decayed banks.”⁴

“The soil of the desert,” says Captain Mignan, who traversed it on foot, and who, in a single day, crossed forty ancient water-courses, “consists of a hard clay, mixed with sand, which at noon becomes so heated with the sun’s rays, that I found it too hot to walk over it with any degree of comfort. Those who have crossed those desert wilds, are

¹ Transactions of the Literary Society at Bombay, vol. i. pp. 123, 138. Captain Frederick on the State of Babylon.

² Keppel’s Narrative, p. 87.

³ Sir R. K. Porter’s Travels in Babylonia, &c., vol. ii. p. 185.

Mignan’s Travels, p. 2.

already acquainted with their dreary tediousness even on horseback; what it is on foot they can easily imagine.”¹

Where astronomers first registered eclipses, and marked the motions of the planetary bodies, the natives, as in the deserts of Africa, or as the mariner without a compass on the pathless ocean, can now direct their course by the stars, over the pathless desert of Chaldea. Where cultivation reached its utmost height, and where two hundred fold was stated as the common produce, there is now one wide and uncultivated waste; *and the sower and reaper are cut off from the land of Babylon.* Where abundant stores and treasures were laid up, and annually renewed and increased, *fanners have fanned, and spoilers have spoiled* them till they have *emptied* the land. Where labourers, shaded by palm-trees a hundred feet high, irrigated the fields till all was plentifully watered from numerous canals, the wanderer, without an object on which to fix his eye, but “stinted and short lived shrubs,” can scarcely set his foot without pain, after the noon-day heat, on the “arid and parched ground,” in plodding his weary way through *a desert, a dry land, and a wilderness.* Where there were crowded thoroughfares from city to city, there is now “silence and solitude;” for the ancient *cities* of Chaldea are *desolations*,—*where no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby.*²

¹ Mignan's Travels, pp. 2, 31-34.

² Sin has wrought desolation in Chaldea, as finally, if unrepented of, it must in any and in every land. But justice shall yet dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness *remain* in the fruitful field: and—not in Judea alone, on the restoration and conversion of all the house of Israel, but throughout all nations when enlightened by the word of God, and renewed by his Spirit, moved by whom the prophets spake,—the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever. (Isa. xxxii. 15-17.) And it is pleasing to pause for a moment, and to turn from the direful retrospect of sin, judgment, and desolation, which the past history of Chaldea holds up to view, to a word of Scripture, (one word, if rightly interpreted, is enough,) which, like a bright star in the east, shines as the harbinger of a brighter day, after the long night of darkness which has rested on that land which was full of wickedness, and therefore has been *emptied* in judg-

Her cities are desolations. The course of the Tigris through Babylonia, instead of being adorned, as of old, with cities and towns, is marked with the sites of "ancient ruins,"¹ Sitace, Sabata, Narisa, Fuchera, Sendia "no longer exist."² A succession of multitudinal mounds, crossed at right angles by others, mark the supposed site of Artemita, or Destagered. Its once luxuriant gardens are covered with grass; and a higher mound distinguishes "the royal residence" from the ancient streets.³ Extensive ridges and mounds (near to Houmania), varying in height and extent, are seen branching in every direction."⁴ A wall, with sixteen bastions, is the only memorial of Apollonia.⁵ The once magnificent Seleucia is now a scene of desolation. There is not a single building, but the country is strewed for miles with fragments of decayed buildings. "As far," says Major Keppel, "as the eye could reach, the horizon presented a broken line of mounds; the whole of this place was a desert flat."⁶ On the opposite bank of the Tigris, where Ctesiphon its rival stood, besides fragments of walls and broken masses of brick-work, and remains of vast structures encumbered with heaps

ment. And seemingly commencing convulsions, in the war and the trial of principles throughout the wide world, that must come,—the rising "hurricane" which, controlled by the Lord, shall yet sweep every moral "pestilence" from the earth, seem, in their beginning, to betoken that the time may not be distant, when the effect of the vision shall be seen. *Then said I to the angel that talked with me (Zechariah v. 10, 11), Whither do these bear the ephah? And he said unto me, To build it an house in the land of Shinar: and it shall be established, and set there upon her own base,—in the land of Shinar, but it is not said, in the city of Babylon.* Building, establishing, and setting, all appear to be significative of a blessing—of reconstruction on a new base, and not reducible to *heaps*; and though the previous vision be of judgment, he whose name is THE BRANCH, is immediately after spoken of; and, in "building the temple of the Lord," his office is redemption. But without a metaphor, it is said, and, without a doubt, it shall prove true—All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of the Lord. The whole earth shall rejoice,—the *wilderness* and the *solitary places* shall be glad for them; and the *desert* shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

¹ See Chart prefixed to Major Keppel's Narrative.

² Plan of the Environs of Babylon, &c. in Major Rennel's Geography of Herodotus, p. 335.

³ Keppel's Narrative, vol. i. p. 267.

⁴ Mignan's Travels, p. 49.

⁵ Keppel, p. 276.

⁶ Ibid. p. 125.

of earth, there is one magnificent monument of antiquity, "in a remarkably perfect state of preservation," "a large and noble pile of building, the front of which presents to view a wall three hundred feet in length, adorned with four rows of arched recesses, with a central arch, in span eighty-six feet, and above an hundred feet high, supported by walls sixteen feet thick, and leading to a hall which extends to the depth of one hundred and fifty-six feet,"¹ the width of the building. A great part of the back wall and of the roof is broken down; but that which remains "still appears much larger than Westminster Abbey."² It is supposed to have been the lofty palace of Chosroes; but there desolation now reigns. "On the site of Ctesiphon, the smallest insect under heaven would not find a single blade of grass wherein to hide itself, nor one drop of water to allay its thirst."³ In the rear of the palace, and attached to it, are mounds two miles in circumference, indicating the utter desolation of buildings, formed to minister to luxury. But, in the words of Captain Mignan, "such is the extent of the irregular mounds and hillocks that overspread the sites of these renowned cities, that it would occupy some months to take the bearings and dimensions of each with accuracy."⁴

While the ancient *cities of Chaldea* are thus *desolate*, the sites of others cannot be discovered, or have not been visited, as none pass thereby; the more modern cities, which flourished under the empire of Califs, "are all in ruins."⁵ The second Bagdad has not indeed yet shared the fate of the first. And Hillah—a town of comparatively modern date, near to the site of Babylon, but in the gardens of which there is not the least vestige of ruins—yet exists. But the former, "ransacked by massacre, devastation, and oppression, during several hundred years," has been "gradu-

¹ Keppel's Narrative, p. 130.

³ Buckingham, p. 441.

⁵ Mignan's Travels, p. 82.

² Mignan's Travels, p. 79.

⁴ Mignan's Travels, p. 81.

ally reduced from being a rich and powerful city, to a state of comparative poverty, and the feeblest means of defence.”¹ And of the inhabitants of the latter, about eight or ten thousand, it is said that “if anything could identify the modern inhabitants of Hillah as the descendants of the ancient Babylonians, it would be their extreme profligacy, for which they are notorious even amongst their immoral neighbours.”² They give no sign of repentance and reformation to warrant the hope that judgment, so long continued upon others, will cease from them; or that they are the people that shall escape. Not many years have passed since towns in Chaldea have been ravaged and pillaged by the Wahabees; and in 1823, the town of Shehreban “was sacked and ruined by the Koords,” and reduced to desolation.³ Indications of ruined cities, whether of a remote or more recent period, abound throughout the land. The process of destruction is still completing. Gardens which studded the banks of the Tigris have very recently disappeared, and mingled with the desert,—and concerning the *cities* also of *Chaldea*, the word is true that they *are desolations*. For “the whole country is strewed over with the débris of Grecian, Roman, and Arabian towns, confounded in the same mass of rubbish.”⁴

But while these lie in indiscriminate ruins, the chief of the cities of Chaldea, the first in name and in power that ever existed in the world, bears many a defined mark of the judgments of Heaven.

¹ Sir R. K. Porter's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 265, 266.

² Keppel's Narrative, vol. i. pp. 182, 183.

³ Ibid. pp. 272, 278.

⁴ Malte-Brun's Geography, vol. ii. p. 119.

SECTION III.

FALLEN BABYLON.

The progressive and predicted decline of Babylon the Great, till it ceased to be a city, has already been briefly detailed. About the beginning of the Christian era a small portion of it was inhabited, and the far greater part was cultivated.¹ It diminished as Seleucia increased, and the latter became the greater city. In the second century nothing but the walls remained. It became gradually a great desert; and in the fourth century, its walls, repaired for that purpose, formed an enclosure for wild beasts, and Babylon was converted into a field for the chase—a hunting-place for the pastime of the Persian monarchs. The name and the remnant were cut off from Babylon; and there is a blank, during the interval of many ages, in the history of its mutilated remains and of its mouldering decay. It remained long in the possession of the Saracens; and abundant evidence has since been given, that every feature of its prophesied desolation is now distinctly visible, for the most ancient historians bore not a clearer testimony to facts confirmatory of the prophecies relative to its first siege and capture by Cyrus, than the latest travellers bear to the fulfilment of those which refer to its final and permanent ruin. The identity of its site has been completely established.² And the truth of every general and every particular prediction is now so clearly demonstrated, that a simple exhibition of the facts precludes the possibility of any cavil,

¹ Diod. Sic. tom. ii. p. 35.

² Rennell's Geography of Herodotus, p. 349. Keppel's Narrative, p. 171. Though this fact was previously doubted by some, all question concerning it is now set at rest by "the inscription usually found on Babylonian bricks," containing the name and titles of Nebuchadnezzar. Layard's Nineveh and Babylon, pp. 496, 502, 504, 506.

and supersedes the necessity of any reasoning on the subject.

It is not merely the general desolation of Babylon—however much that alone would have surpassed all human foresight—which the Lord declared by the mouth of his prophets. In their *vision*, they saw not more clearly, nor defined more precisely, the future history of Babylon, from the height of its glory to the oblivion of its name, than they saw and depicted *fallen Babylon*, as now it lies, and as, in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, it has for the first time been fully described.¹ And now when *an end has come upon Babylon*, after a long succession of ages has wrought out its utter desolation, both the pen and the pencil of travellers, who have traversed and inspected its ruins, must be combined, in order to delineate what the word of God, by the prophets, told from the beginning that that end would be.

Truth ever scorns the discordant and encumbering aid of error: but to diverge in the least from the most precise facts, would here weaken and destroy the argument; for the predictions correspond not closely with anything, except alone with the express and literal reality. To swerve from it is, in the same degree, to vary from them: and any misrepresentation would be no less hurtful than iniquitous. But the actual fact renders any exaggeration impossible, and any fiction poor. Fancy could not have feigned a contrast more complete, nor a destruction greater than that which has come from the Almighty upon Babylon. And though the greatest city on which the sun ever shone be now a *desolate wilderness*, there is scarcely any spot on earth more

¹ Niebuhr, Ives, Irwin, Ottar, Evirs, Thevenot, Della Valle, Texeira, Edrisi, Abulfeda, and Balbi, were consulted by Major Rennell; to these may now be added, Mr Rich, Sir Robert Ker Porter, Captain Frederick, the Hon. Major Keppel, Colonel Kennier, Mr Buckingham, and Captain Mignan,—most of whom were accompanied by others.

clearly defined—and none could be more accurately delineated by the hands of a draftsman—than the scene of Babylon's desolation is set before us in the very words of the prophets; and no words could now be chosen like unto those, which for two thousand five hundred years have been its "burden"—the burden which now it bears.

Such is the multiplicity of prophecies and the accumulation of facts, that the very abundance of evidence increases the difficulty of arranging them, in a condensed form, and thus appropriating its specific fulfilment to each precise and separate prediction; and many of them may be viewed connectedly. All who have visited Babylon concur in acknowledging or testifying that the desolation is exactly such as was foretold. They, in general, apply the more prominent predictions; and, in minute details, they sometimes unconsciously adopt, without any allusion or reference, the words of inspiration.

Babylon is wholly desolate. It has become heaps—it is cut down to the ground—brought down to the grave—trodden on—uninhabited—its foundations fallen—its walls thrown down, and utterly broken—its loftiest edifices rolled down from the rocks—the golden city has ceased—the worms are spread under it, and the worms cover it, &c. There the Arabian pitches not his tent; there the shepherds make not their folds; but wild beasts of the desert lie there, and their houses are full of doleful creatures, and owls dwell there, &c. It is a possession for the bittern, and a dwelling-place for dragons—a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert—a burnt mountain—pools of water—spoiled—empty—nothing left—utterly destroyed—every one that goeth by it is astonished, &c.

Babylon shall become heaps. Babylon the glory of kingdoms is now the greatest of ruins. "Immense tumuli of temples, palaces, and human habitations of every descrip-

tion," are everywhere seen, and form "long and varied lines of ruins," which in some places "rather resemble natural hills than *mounds* which cover the remains of great and splendid edifices."¹ Those buildings which were once the labour of slaves and the pride of kings, are now misshapen heaps of rubbish. "The whole face of the country is covered with vestiges of building, in some places consisting of brick-walls surprisingly fresh, in others, merely a *vast succession of mounds* of rubbish, of such indeterminate figures, variety, and extent, as to involve the person who should have formed any theory in inextricable confusion."² "Long mounds running from north to south, are crossed by others from east to west;" and are only distinguished by their form, direction, and number, from the decayed banks of canals. "The greater part of the mounds are certainly the remains of buildings, originally disposed in streets, and crossing each other at right angles."³ The more distinct and prominent of these "heaps" are double, or lie in parallel lines, each exceeding twenty feet, and "are intersected by cross passages, in such a manner as to place beyond a doubt the fact of their being rows of houses or streets fallen into decay."⁴ Such was the form of the streets of Babylon, leading towards the gates; and such are now the lines of its heaps. "There are also, in some places, two hollow channels, and three mounds, running parallel to each other for a considerable distance, the central mound being, in such cases, a broader and flatter mass than the other two, as if there had been two streets going parallel to each other, the central range of houses which divided them being twice the size of the others, from their being double residences, with a front and door of entrance to face each avenue."⁵ "Irregular hillocks

¹ Porter's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 294, 297.

² Rich's Memoirs, p. 2.

³ Buckingham's Travels in Mesopotamia, vol. ii. p. 298.

⁴ Ibid. p. 299.

⁵ Ibid. p. 299.

and mounds, *formed over* masses of ruins, present at every step memorials of the past.”¹

From the temple of Belus and the two royal palaces, to the streets of the city and single dwellings, all have *become heaps*; and the only difference or gradation now is from the vast and solid masses of ruins which look like mountains, to the slight mound that is scarcely elevated above the plain. *Babylon is fallen*, literally FALLEN to such a degree that those who stand on its site and look on numerous parallel mounds, with a hollow space between, are sometimes at a loss to distinguish between the remains of a street or a canal, or to tell where the crowds frequented, or where the waters flowed. *Babylon is fallen*, till its ruins cannot fall lower than they lie. *It is cut down to the ground. Her foundations are fallen*; and the ruins rest not on them. Its palaces, temples, streets, and houses, lie “*buried in shapeless heaps*.”² And “the view of Babylon,” as taken from the spot, is truly a picture of utter desolation, presenting its *heaps* to the eye, and showing how, as if literally buried under them, *Babylon is brought down to the grave*.

Cast her up as heaps. Mr Rich, in describing a grand heap of ruins, the shape of which is nearly a square of seven hundred yards in length and breadth, states that the workmen pierce into it in every direction, in search of bricks, “hollowing out deep ravines and pits, and *throwing up* the rubbish *in heaps* on the surface.”³ “The summit of the Kasr,” (supposed to have been the lesser palace,) is in like manner “covered with *heaps of rubbish*.”

Let nothing of her be left. “Vast heaps constitute *all that now remains* of ancient Babylon.”⁴ All its grandeur is departed; all its treasures have been spoiled; all its

¹ Mignan's Travels, vol. ii. p. 116.

² Rich's Memoirs, p. 22.

³ Porter's Travels, p. 204.

⁴ Keppel's Narrative, p. 196.



I sat beside Evelyn, poor old wife, and I will weep it with her for our
 old devotion, and the best of it, I hope, is still in the
 ground, but it became weak, with old age, and I hope, it is

excellence has utterly vanished ; the very heaps are searched for bricks when nothing else can be found ; even these are *not left* wherever they can be taken away, and Babylon has for ages been “a quarry above ground,” ready to the hand of every successive despoiler. Without the most remote allusion to this prophecy, Captain Mignan describes a mound attached to the palace, ninety yards in breadth by half that height, the whole of which is deeply furrowed in the same manner as the generality of the mounds. “The ground is extremely soft, and tiresome to walk over, and appears *completely exhausted* of all its building materials: *nothing now is left* save one towering hill, the earth of which is mixed with *fragments* of broken brick, red varnished pottery, tile, bitumen, mortar, glass, shells, and pieces of mother of pearl,”¹—worthless fragments, of no value to the poorest. *Let nothing of her be left.* One traveller, towards the end of last century, passed over the site of ancient Babylon, without being conscious of having traversed it.² Mr Layard, who has enriched the British Museum with sculptures from Nineveh, thus speaks of his “discoveries amongst the ruins of ancient Babylon. They were far less numerous and important than I could have anticipated, and did not tend to prove that there were remains beneath the heaps of earth and rubbish which would reward more extensive excavations. It was not even possible to trace the general plan of any one edifice ; only shapeless piles of masonry, and isolated walls and piers, were brought to light—giving no clue whatever to the original forms of the buildings to which they belonged.”³

Babylon shall be pools of water. While the workmen *cast her up as heaps* in piling up the rubbish while exca-

¹ Mignan's Travels, pp. 190, 200.

² Transactions of the Literary Society at Bombay, vol. i. p. 130. Note, Cunningham's Journey to India, 1785.

³ Nineveh and Babylon, pp. 527-528.

vating for bricks, that *nothing may be left*, they labour more than doubly in the fulfilment of prophecy, for the numerous and deep excavations form *pools of water*, on the overflowing of the Euphrates, and, annually filled, they are not dried up throughout the year. "Deep cavities are also formed by the Arabs, when digging for hidden treasure."¹ "The ground is sometimes covered with pools of water in the hollows."²

Sit in the dust, sit on the ground, O daughter of the Chaldeans. The surface of the mounds which form all that remains of Babylon, consists of decomposed buildings, reduced to dust; and over all the ancient streets and habitations, there is literally nothing but the dust or the ground on which to sit.

Thy nakedness shall be uncovered. "Our path," says Captain Mignan, "lay through the great mass of ruined heaps on the site of 'shrunk Babylon.' And I am perfectly incapable of conveying an adequate idea of the dreary, lonely nakedness that appeared before me."³

Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness. There reigns throughout the ruins "a silence profound as the grave."⁴ Babylon is now a "silent scene, a sublime solitude."⁵

It shall never be inhabited, nor dwelt in from generation to generation. From Rauwolff's testimony it appears that in the sixteenth century "there was not a house to be seen."⁶ And now "the eye wanders over a *barren desert* in which the ruins are nearly the only indication that it ever had been inhabited." "It is impossible," adds Major Keppel, "to behold this scene and not to be reminded how exactly the predictions of Isaiah and Jeremiah have been fulfilled, even in the appearance Babylon was doomed to present, that *she should never be inhabited*; that the

¹ Mignan's Travels, p. 213.

² Buckingham's Travels, vol. ii. p. 296. Keppel's Travels, vol. i. p. 125.

³ Mignan's Travels, p. 116.

⁴ Porter's Travels, vol. ii. p. 294.

⁵ Ibid. p. 407.

⁶ Ibid. p. 174.

‘Arabian should not pitch his tent there;’ that she should ‘become heaps;’ that her cities should be ‘a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness.’”¹ “Babylon is spurned alike by the heel of the Ottomans, the Israelites, and the sons of Ishmael.”² It is “a *tenantless* and desolate metropolis.”³ *It shall not be inhabited but be wholly desolate.*

Neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. It was prophesied of Ammon that it should be a stable for camels and a couching-place for flocks; and of the sea-coast of Philistia, that it should be dwellings for shepherds, and folds for flocks. But Babylon was to be visited with a far greater desolation, and to become unfit or unsuitable even for such a purpose. And that neither a tent would be pitched there, even by an Arab, nor a fold made by a shepherd, implies the last degree of solitude and desolation. “It is common in these parts for shepherds to make use of ruined edifices to shelter their flocks in.”⁴ But Babylon is an exception. Instead of taking the bricks from it, the shepherd might with facility erect a defence from wild beasts, and make a fold for his flock amidst the heaps of Babylon; and the Arab who fearlessly traverses it by day, might pitch his tent by night. But neither the one nor the other could now be persuaded to remain a single night among *the ruins*. The superstitious dread of evil spirits, far more than the natural terror of the wild beasts, effectually prevents them. Captain Mignan was accompanied by six *Arabs*, completely armed, but he “could not induce them to remain towards night, from the apprehension of evil spirits. It is impossible to eradicate this idea from the minds of these people, who are very deeply imbued with superstition.” And when the sun sunk behind the *Mujelib*, and the moon would have

¹ Keppel's Narrative, vol. i. p. 107.

² Mignan's Travels, p. 108.

³ Ibid. p. 234.

⁴ Ibid. p. 235.

still lighted his way among the ruins, it was with infinite regret that he obeyed "*the summons of his guides.*"¹ "*All the people of the country assert that it is extremely dangerous to approach this mound after nightfall, on account of the multitude of evil spirits by which it is haunted.*"² *Neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But*

Wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs (goats) shall dance there, &c. "There are many dens of wild beasts in various parts. There are quantities of porcupine quills" (kephud?). And while the lower excavations are often pools of water, "in most of the cavities are numbers of bats and owls."³ "These soutterains (caverns), over which the chambers of majesty may have been spread, are now the refuge of jackals and other savage animals. The mouths of their entrances are strewn with the bones of sheep and goats: and the loathsome smell that issues from most of them is sufficient warning not to proceed into the den."⁴ The king of the forest now ranges over the site of that Babylon which Nebuchadnezzar built for his own glory. And the temple of Belus, the greatest work of man, is now like unto a natural den of lions. "Two or three majestic lions" were seen upon its heights, by Sir Robert Ker Porter, as he was approaching it; and "the broad prints of their feet were left plain in the clayey soil."⁵ Major Keppel saw there a similar foot-print of a lion. It is also the unmolested retreat of jackals, hyenas, and other noxious animals.⁶ Wild beasts are "numerous" at the *Mujelibé*, as well as on *Birs Nimrood*. "The mound was full of large holes; we entered some of them, and found

¹ Mignan's Travels, pp. 201, 235.

² Rich's Mem. p. 27. Buckingham's Travels, v. ii. p. 397.

⁴ Sir R. K. Porter's Travels, vol. ii. p. 342.

⁶ Kinnier's Memoirs, p. 279.

³ Ibid. p. 30.

⁵ Ibid. p. 387.

them strewed with the carcases and skeletons of animals recently killed. The ordure of wild beasts was so strong that prudence got the better of curiosity, for we had no doubt as to the savage nature of the inhabitants. Our guides, indeed, told us that all the ruins abounded in lions and other wild beasts ; so literally has the Divine prediction been fulfilled, that wild beasts of the desert should lie there, and their houses be full of doleful creatures ; that the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses.”¹ “A foul and unbearable stench issued from these loathsome remains (in the Birs Nimrood), and from the passages which had become the den of wild beasts, who had worked their way into them from above.”²

The sea is come upon Babylon. She is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof. The traces of the western bank of the Euphrates are now no longer discernible. The river overflows unrestrained ; and the very ruins, “with every appearance of the embankment,” have been swept away. “The ground there is low and marshy, and presents not the slightest vestige of former buildings, of any description whatever.”³ “Morasses and ponds tracked the ground in various parts. For a long time after the general subsiding of the Euphrates, great part of this plain is little better than a swamp,” &c.⁴ “The ruins of Babylon are then *inundated*, so as to render many parts of them inaccessible, by converting the valleys among them into morasses.”⁵ “From the summit of the Birs Nimrood,” says Mr Layard, “I gazed over a vast marsh, for Babylon is made ‘a possession for the bittern, and pools of water.’”⁶ But while Babylon is thus covered with the multitude of waves and the waters come

¹ Keppel's Narrative, vol. i. pp. 179, 180.

² Layard's Nineveh and Babylon.

³ Buckingham's Travels, vol. ii. p. 278.

⁴ Sir R. K. Porter's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 389, 390.

⁵ Rich's Memoirs, p. 13.

⁶ Nineveh and Babylon, p. 500.

upon it, yet, in striking contrast and seeming contradiction to such a feature of desolation, (like the formation of *pools of water* from the *casting up of heaps*), at all times the elevated sun-burnt ruins, which the waters do not overflow, and generally throughout the year, the “dry waste, and parched and burning plain,”¹ on which the heaps of Babylon lie, equally prove that it is *a desert, a dry land, and a wilderness*. One part, even on the western side of the river, is “low and *marshy*, and another an *arid desert*.”²

It shall never be inhabited. It shall be utterly desolate. “Ruins composed, like those of Babylon, of heaps of rubbish impregnated with nitre, cannot be cultivated.”³ “The decomposing materials of a Babylonian structure doom the earth on which they perish to everlasting sterility.—On this part of the plain, both where traces of buildings were left, and where none had stood, all seemed equally *naked* of vegetation; the whole ground appearing as if it had been washed over and over again, by the coming and receding waters, till every bit of genial soil was swept away; its half-clay, half-sandy surface being left in ridgy streaks, like what is often seen on the flat shores of the sea after the retreating of the tide.”⁴ Babylon, which in its pride did say, I shall be a lady for ever, is no more called the lady of kingdoms, but is *desolate for ever*.

Bel boweth down. The temple of Belus or Baal, here evidently spoken of, was a stadium, or furlong in height, computed by Major Rennell at five hundred, and by Prideaux at six hundred feet. By the lowest computation it was higher than the greatest pyramids. The *highest* of the heaps which now constitute fallen Babylon, is the Birs Nim-

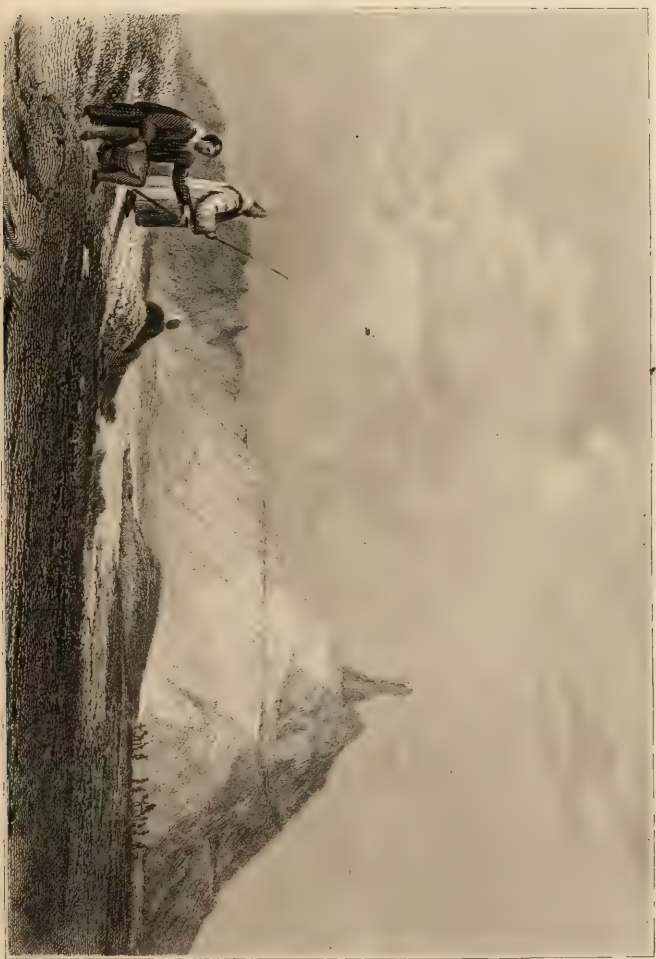
¹ Buckingham's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 302, 305.

² Mignan's Travels, p. 139, Plan.

³ Rich's Memoirs, p. 16.

⁴ Sir R. K. Porter's Travels, vol. ii. p. 392.

THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA



View of the Great Wall of China, as seen from the sea, with the mountains in the background.



rood,¹ generally supposed to have been the temple of Belus. The heap occupies a larger space of ground than that on which the temple stood, having spread in falling down beyond its original base. It rests not now upon its ancient foundations, but lies upon the earth, an enormous mass of ruin. "At first sight it presents the appearance of a hill, with a castle at the top,"² so as not only to deceive the eye in beholding it at a distance, or in looking on its picture; but, "incredible as it may seem, the ruins on the summit of it are actually those spoken of by Pere Emmanuel, who takes no sort of notice of the prodigious mound on which they are elevated. It is almost needless to observe, that the whole of the mound is itself a ruin."³

Bel is confounded. Originally constructed of eight successive towers, one rising above another, it is now consolidated into one irregular hill, presenting a different aspect and of different altitudes on every side,—a confused and misshapen mass. "The eastern face presents two stages of hill; the first showing an elevation of about sixty feet cloven in the middle into a deep ravine, and intersected in all directions by furrows channelled there by the descending rains of succeeding ages. The summit of this first stage stretches in rather a flattened sweep to the base of the second ascent, which springs out of the first in a steep and abrupt conical form, terminated on the top by a solitary standing fragment of brick-work, like the ruin of a tower. From the foundation of the whole pile to the base of this piece of ruin, measures about two hundred feet, and from the bottom of the ruin to its shattered top are thirty-five feet. On the western side, the entire mass rises at once from the plain in

¹ That it was a Babylonian building which existed in the days of Jeremiah, is manifest from the fact, "that every inscribed brick taken from it—and there are thousands and tens of thousands—bear the name of this king" (Nebuchadnezzar). Layard's *Nineveh and Babylon*, p. 496.

² Mignan's *Travels*, p. 192.

³ Rich's *Memoirs*, p. 37.

one stupendous, though irregular, pyramidal hill, broken, in the slopes of its sweeping acclivities, by the devastations of time and rougher destruction. The southern and northern fronts are particularly abrupt."¹ Such, and so *confounded* is now the temple of Belus.

I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain. On the summits of the hill are "immense fragments of brick-work of no determinate figures, tumbled together, and converted into solid vitrified masses."² "Some of these huge fragments measured twelve feet in height, by twenty-four in circumference; and from the circumstance of the standing brick-work having remained in a perfect state, the change exhibited in these is only accountable from their having been exposed to the *fiercest fire, or rather, scathed by lightning.*"³ "They are completely molten—a strong presumption that fire was used in the destruction of the tower, which in part resembles what the Scriptures prophesied it should become, 'a burnt mountain.' In the denunciation respecting Babylon, fire is particularly mentioned as an agent against it. To this Jeremiah evidently alludes, when he says that it should be, 'as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,' on which cities it is said, 'the Lord rained brimstone and fire.'—'Her high gates shall be burnt with fire, and the people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary.'"⁴ "In many of these immense unshapen masses, might be traced the gradual effects of the consuming power, which had produced so remarkable an appearance; exhibiting parts burnt to that variegated dark hue, seen in the vitrified matter lying about in glass manufactories; while, through the whole of these awful testimonies of the fire, (whatever fire it was!) which, doubtless,

¹ Sir R. K. Porter's Travels, vol. ii. p. 310.

² Rich's Memoirs, p. 36.

³ Mignan's Travels, p. 207.

⁴ Keppel's Narrative, pp. 194, 195.

hurled them from their original elevation," (*I will roll thee down from the rocks,*) "the regular lines of the cement are visible, and so hardened in common with the bricks, that when masses are struck they ring like glass. On examining the base of the standing wall, contiguous to these huge transmuted substances, it is found tolerably free from any similar changes, in short, quite in its original state; hence," continues Sir Robert Ker Porter, "I draw the conclusion, that the consuming power acted from above, and that the scattered ruin fell from some higher point than the summit of the present standing fragment. The heat of the fire which produced such amazing effects, must have burned with the force of the strongest furnace; and from the general appearance of the cleft in the wall, and these vitrified masses, I should be induced to attribute the catastrophe to lightning from heaven. Ruins, by the explosion of consumable matter, would have exhibited very different appearances."¹

"The fallen masses bear evident proof of the operation of fire having been continued on them, as well after they were broken down as before, since every part of their surface has been so equally exposed to it, that many of them have acquired a rounded form, and in none can the place of separation from its adjoining one be traced by any appearance of superior freshness, or any exemption from the influence of destroying flame."² "The calcined and vitreous surface of the bricks fused into rock-like masses, show that their fall may have been caused by lightning."³

The high gates, which were standing in the time of Herodotus, have been *burnt with fire*; the vitrified masses, which fell when *Bel bowed down*, rest on the top of its stupendous ruins. *The hand of the Lord has been stretched upon it; it*

¹ Sir Robert Ker Porter's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 312, 313.

² Buckingham's Travels, vol. ii. p. 375.

³ Layard's Nineveh and Babylon, p. 496.

has been rolled down from the rocks, and has been made a burnt mountain,—of which it was further prophesied,

They shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations; but thou shalt be desolate for ever, saith the Lord. The old wastes of Zion shall be built; its former desolations shall be raised up; and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem. But it shall not be with Bel as with Zion, nor with Babylon as with Jerusalem. For as the “heaps of rubbish, impregnated with nitre,” which cover the site of Babylon, “cannot be cultivated,”¹ so the vitrified masses on the summit of Birs Nimrood cannot be rebuilt. Though still they be of the hardest substance, and indestructible by the elements, and though once they formed the highest pinnacles of Belus, yet incapable of being hewn into any regular form, they neither are, nor can now be taken *for a corner or for foundations*. And the bricks on the solid fragments of wall, which rest on the summit, though neither scathed nor molten, are so firmly cemented, that according to Mr Rich, “it is nearly impossible to detach any of them whole;”² or, as Captain Mignan still more forcibly states, “they are so firmly cemented, that it is utterly impossible to detach any of them.”³ “My most violent attempts,” says Sir Robert Ker Porter, “could not separate them;”⁴ and Mr Buckingham, in assigning reasons for lessening the wonder at the total disappearance of the walls at this distant period, and speaking of the Birs Nimrood generally, observes, that, “the burnt bricks (the only ones sought after) which are found in the Mujelibé, the Kasr, and the Birs Nimrood, the only three *great monuments* in which there are any traces of their having been used, are so difficult, in the two last indeed so impossible, to be extracted whole, from the tenacity

¹ Rich's Memoirs, p. 16.

² Ibid. p. 36.

³ Mignan's Travels, p. 206.

⁴ Travels, vol. ii. p. 311.

of the cement in which they are laid, that they could never have been resorted to while any considerable portion of the walls existed to furnish an easier supply; even now, though some portion of the mounds on the eastern bank of the river" (the Birs is on the western side) "are occasionally dug into for bricks, they are not extracted without a comparatively great expense, and very few of them whole, in proportion to the great number of fragments that come up with them.¹ Around the tower there is not a single whole brick to be seen.²

These united testimonies, given without allusion to the prediction, afford a better than any conjectural commentary, such as had previously been given without reference to these facts.

While in many places *nothing is left*, yet, of the *burnt mountain*, which forms an accumulation of ruins enough in magnitude to build a city, men do not take a stone for foundations nor a stone for a corner. Having undergone the action of the fiercest fire, and being completely molten, the masses on the summit of Bel, on which the hand of the Lord has been stretched, cannot be reduced into any other form or substance, nor be built up again by the hand of man. And the tower of Babel, if such was the temple of Belus, which witnessed the first dispersion of mankind, shall itself be witnessed by the latest generation, even as now it stands *desolate for ever*,—an indestructible monument of human pride and folly, and of divine judgment and truth. The greatest of the ruins, as once of the edifices of Babylon, is rolled down into a vast, indiscriminate, cloven, confounded, useless, and blasted mass, from which fragments might be hurled with as little injury to the ruined heap, as from a bare and rocky mountain's side. Such is the triumph of

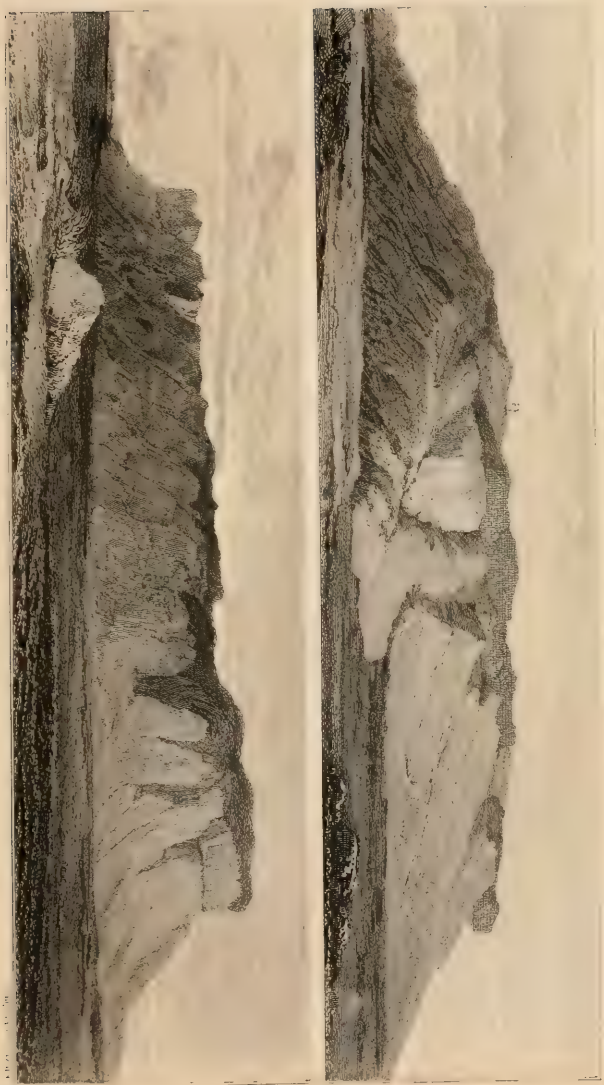
¹ Buckingham's Travels, vol. ii. p. 332.

² Porter's Travels, vol. ii. p. 329.

the word of the living God over the proudest of the temples of Baal.

Merodach is broken in pieces. Merodach was a name or title common to the princes and kings of Babylon, of which, in the brief Scriptural references to their history, two instances are recorded, viz. Merodach-Baladan the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, who exercised the office of government, and Evil-Merodach, who lived in the days of Jeremiah. From Merodach being here associated with Bel, or the temple of Belus, and from the similarity of their judgments—the one *bowed down and confounded*, and the other *broken in pieces*—it may reasonably be inferred that some other famous Babylonian building is here also denoted; while, at the same time, the express identity of the name with that of the kings of Babylon, and even with Evil-Merodach, then residing there, it may with equal reason be inferred that, under the name of Merodach, the palace is spoken of by the prophet. And next to the idolatrous temple, as the seat of false worship which corrupted and destroyed the nations, it may well be imagined that the royal residence of the despot who oppressed the people of Israel, and made the earth to tremble, would be selected as the marked object of the righteous judgments of God. And secondary only to the Birs Nimrood, in the greatness of its ruins, is the Mujelibé or Makloubé, generally understood and described by travellers as the remains of the chief palace of Babylon.

The palace of the king of Babylon almost vied with the great temple of their god. And there is now some controversy, in which of the principal mountainous heaps the one or the other lies buried. But the *utter desolation* of both leaves no room for any debate on the question,—which of the twain is *bowed down and confounded*, and which of them is *broken in pieces*.



The picture is the same as the one in the
 book, but the figure is a different one.
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 book, but the figure is a different one.

The two palaces, or castles of Babylon, were strongly fortified. And the larger was surrounded by three walls of great extent.¹ When the city was suddenly taken by Demetrius, he seized on one of the castles by surprise, and displaced its garrison by seven thousand of his own troops, whom he stationed within it.² Of the other he could not make himself master. Their extent and strength, at a period of three hundred years after the delivery of the prophecy, are thus sufficiently demonstrated. The solidity of the structure of the greater, as well as of the lesser palace, might have warranted the belief of its unbroken durability for ages. And never was there a building whose splendour and magnificence were in greater contrast to its present desolation. The vestiges of the walls which surrounded it are still to be seen, and serve with other circumstances to identify it with the Mujelibé, as the name Merodach is identified with the palace. *It is broken in pieces*, and hence its name Mujelibé, signifying overturned, or turned upside down. Its circumference is about half a mile; its height one hundred and forty feet. But it is “a mass of confusion, none of its members being distinguishable.”³ The existence of chambers, passages, and cellars, of different forms and sizes, and built of different materials, has been fully ascertained.⁴ It is the receptacle of wild beasts, and full of doleful creatures: wild beasts cry in the desolate houses, and *dragons in the pleasant palaces*; “venomous reptiles being very numerous throughout the ruins.”⁵ “All the sides are worn into furrows by the weather, and in some places where several channels of rain have united together, these furrows are of great depth, and penetrate a consider-

¹ Diodor. Sic. lib. ii. p. 29. Herod. lib. i. cap. clxxxi.

² Plutarch's Life of Demetrius.

³ Della Valle. See Univ. Hist. vol. i. p. 135. Buckingham's Travels, vol. ii. p. 273.

⁴ Ibid. p. 274

⁵ Mignan's Travels, p. 168.

able way into the mound.”¹ “The *sides* of the ruin exhibit hollows worn partly by the weather.”² *It is brought down to the grave, to the sides of the pit.*

*They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms? Narrowly to look on and to consider even the view of the Mujelibé, is to see what the palace of Babylon, in which kings, proud as “Lucifer,” boasted of exalting themselves above the “stars of God,” has now become, and how, cut down to the ground, it is broken in pieces.*³

“On pacing over the loose stones and fragments of brick-work which lay scattered through the immense fabric, and surveying the sublimity of the ruins,” says Captain Mignan, “I naturally recurred to the time when these walls stood proudly in their original splendour,—when the halls were the scenes of festive magnificence, and when they resounded to the voices of those whom death has long since swept from the earth. This very pile was once the seat of luxury and vice; now abandoned to decay, and exhibiting a melancholy instance of the retribution of Heaven. It stands alone;—the solitary habitation of the goat-herd marks not the forsaken site.”⁴ *Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols; the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.*

¹ Rich's Memoirs, p. 29.

² Mignan's Travels, p. 167.

³ By the kindness of Sir Robert Ker Porter's family, in his absence abroad, the author was presented with the original drawings of the Birs Nimrood and Mujelibé, for engravings, as here inserted. His *Travels in Persia, Babylonia, &c.*, contain four views of each, which show how, on every side, they are bowed down and broken in pieces. Small engravings of them are also inserted in *Mines de l'Orient, Vienne*; in Rich's Memoirs on the Ruins of Babylon, and in Mr Buckingham's Travels. There is a view of each in Captain Mignan's Travels. The curious reader may contrast the Mujelibé with Martin's splendid picture of “Belshazzar's Feast.” The place, no longer a palace, is the same. Every child is familiar with the common picture of the temple of Belus, the ancient magnificence of which could not well be exaggerated, any more than the faintest resemblance to its ancient splendour could be recognised in what it now is—the Birs Nimrood.

⁴ Mignan's Travels, pp. 172, 173.

Thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcase trodden under feet. “Several deep excavations have been made in different places, into the sides of the Mujelibé: some probably by the wearing of the seasons; but many others have been dug up by the rapacity of the Turks, tearing up its bowels in search of hidden treasure,”—*as if the palace of Babylon were cast out of its grave.* “Several penetrate very far into the body of the structure,” till it has become *as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword.* “And some, it is likely, have never yet been explored, the wild beasts of the desert literally keeping guard over them.”¹ “The mound was full of large holes”²—*thrust through.*

Near to the Mujelibé, on the supposed site of the hanging gardens, which were situated within the walls of the palace, “the ruins are so *perforated*, in consequence of the digging for bricks, that the original design is entirely lost. All that could favour any conjecture of gardens built on terraces, are two *subterranean passages*. There can be no doubt that both *passages* are of vast extent; they are lined with bricks laid in with bitumen and *covered over with large masses of stone.* This is nearly the only place where stone is observable.”³ Arches built upon arches raised the hanging gardens from terrace to terrace, till the highest was on a level with the top of the city walls. Now they are *cast out like an abominable branch—and subterranean passages* are disclosed,—*down to the stones of the pit.*

As a carcase trodden under feet. The streets of Babylon were parallel, crossed by others at right angles, and abounded

¹ Sir R. K. Porter's Travels, vol. ii. p. 343.

² Keppel's Travels, vol. i. p. 179.

³ Ibid. vol. i. p. 205.

with houses three and four stories high;¹ and none can now traverse the site of Babylon, or find any other path, without *treading them under foot*. The traveller directs his course to the highest mounds; and there are none, whether temples or palaces, that are not *trodden on*. The Mujelibé “rises in a steep ascent, *over which* the passengers can only go up by the winding paths *worn* by frequent visits to the ruined edifice.”²

Her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces. All the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground. “This place,” says Beauchamp, quoted by Major Rennel, “and the mount of Babel, are commonly called by the Arabs Makloubé, that is, turned *topsy-turvy*. I was informed by the master-mason, employed to dig for bricks, that the places from which he procured them were large thick walls, and sometimes chambers. He has frequently found earthen vessels, *engraved marbles*, and about eight years ago, a *statue* as large as life, which he *threw among the rubbish*. On one wall of the chamber, he found the figure of a cow, and of the sun and moon, formed of varnished bricks. Sometimes *idols* of clay are found, representing human figures.”³ “Small figures of brass or copper are found at Babylon.”⁴ “Bronze antiquities, generally much corroded with rust, but exhibiting small figures of men and animals, are *often* found among the ruins,”⁵ or *broken unto the ground*. “No sculptures or inscribed slabs, the panelling of the walls of palaces, have been discovered among the ruins of Babylon as in those of Nineveh. Scarcely a detached figure in stone, or a solitary tablet, has been dug out of the vast heaps of rubbish. ‘Babylon is fallen, is

¹ Herod. lib. i. cap. clxxx.

² Buckingham's Travels, vol. ii. p. 258.

³ Rennel's Geography of Herodotus, p. 362.

⁴ Rich's Second Memoir, p. 58.

⁵ Mignan's Travels, p. 229.

fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.’”¹

The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken. They were so broad, that, as ancient historians relate, six chariots could be driven on them abreast; or a chariot and four horses might pass and turn. They existed, as walls, for more than a thousand years after the prophecy was delivered; and long after the sentence of utter destruction had gone forth against them, they were numbered among “the seven wonders of the world.” And what can be more wonderful now, or what could have been more inconceivable by man, when Babylon was in its strength and glory, than that the broad walls of Babylon should be so utterly broken, that it cannot be determined with certainty that even the slightest vestige of them exists?

“All accounts agree,” says Mr Rich, “in the height of the walls, which was fifty cubits, having been reduced to these dimensions from the prodigious height of three hundred and fifty feet,” (formerly stated, by the lowest computation of the length of the cubit, at three hundred feet,) “by Darius Hystaspes, after the rebellion of the town, in order to render it less defensible. I have not been fortunate enough to discover the *least trace* of them in *any part* of the ruins at Hillah; which is rather an unaccountable circumstance, considering that they survived the final ruin of the town, long after which they served as an enclosure for a park; in which comparatively perfect state St Jerome informs us they remained in his time.”²

In the sixteenth century they were seen for the last time by a European traveller (so far as the author has been able to trace), before they were finally so utterly broken as totally to disappear. And it is interesting to mark both the time and the manner in which the walls of Babylon,

¹ Layard's *Nineveh and Babylon*, p. 523.

² Rich's *Memoirs*, pp. 43, 44.

like the city of which they were the impregnable yet un-availing defence, were brought down to the grave, to be seen no more.

"The meanwhile," as Rauwolff describes them, "when we were lodged there, I considered and viewed this ascent, and found that there were two behind one another," (Herodotus states that there was both an inner, or inferior, and outer wall)¹ "distinguished by a ditch, and extending themselves like unto two parallel *walls* a great way about, and that they were open in some places, where one may go through like gates; wherefore I believe that they were the wall of the old town that went about them; and that the places where they were open have been anciently the gates (whereof there were one hundred) of that town. And this the rather because I saw in some places under the sand (wherewith the two ascents were *almost covered*) the *old wall* plainly appear."²

The cities of Seleucia, Ctesiphon, Destagered, Kufa, and anciently many others in the vicinity, together with the more modern towns of Mesched Ali, Mesched Hussein, and Hillah, "with towns, villages, and caravansaries without number;"³ have, in all probability, been chiefly built out of the walls of Babylon. Like the city, the walls have been taken from thence, till none of them are *left*. The rains of many hundred years, and the waters coming upon them annually by the overflowing of the Euphrates, have also, in all likelihood, washed down the dust and rubbish from the broken and dilapidated walls into the ditch from which they were originally taken, till at last the sand of the parched desert has smoothed them into a plain, and added the place where they stood to the wilderness, so that the *broad walls of Babylon are utterly broken*. And now, as the subjoined

¹ Lib. i. c. 181.

² Ray's Collection of Travels, pp. 177, 178.

³ Sir R. K. Porter's Travels, vol. ii. p. 338.

evidence, supplementary of what has already been adduced, fully proves,—it may verily be said that the loftiest wall ever built by man, as well as the “greatest city on which the sun ever shone,” which these walls surrounded, and the most fertile of countries, of which Babylon the Great was the capital and the glory,—have all been *swept by the Lord of Hosts with the besom of destruction*.

A chapter of sixty pages in length, of Mr Buckingham's *Travels in Mesopotamia*, is entitled, “Search after the Wall of Babylon.” After a long and fruitless search, he discovered on the eastern boundary of the ruins, on the *summit* of an *oval mound* from seventy to eighty feet in height, and from three to four hundred feet in circumference, “a mass of solid wall, about thirty feet in length, by twelve or fifteen in thickness, yet evidently once of much greater dimensions each way, the work being, in its present state, *broken and incomplete in every part*:”¹ and this heap of ruin and fragment of wall he conjectured to be a part—the only part, if such it be, that can be discovered—of the walls of Babylon, *so utterly are they broken*. Beyond this there is not even a pretension to the discovery of any part of them.

Captain Frederick, of whose journey it was the “principal object to search for the remains of the wall and ditch that had compassed Babylon,” states, that neither of these has been seen by any modern traveller. “All my inquiries among the Arabs,” he adds, “on this subject, completely failed in producing the smallest effect. Within the space of twenty-one miles in length, along the banks of the Euphrates, and twelve miles across its breadth, I was unable to perceive anything that could admit of my imagining that either a wall or a ditch had existed within this extensive area. If any remains do exist of the walls, they must have been of greater circumference than is allowed by

¹ Buckingham's *Travels*, vol. ii. pp. 206, 307.

modern geographers. I may possibly have been deceived ; but I spared no pains to prevent it. I never was employed in riding and walking less than eight hours for six successive days, and upwards of twelve on the seventh.”¹

Major Keppel relates, that he and the party who accompanied him, “in common with other travellers, had totally failed in discovering any trace of the city walls ;” and he adds, “the Divine predictions against Babylon have been so literally fulfilled in the appearance of the ruins, that I am disposed to give the fullest signification to the words of Jeremiah—the broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken.”²

Babylon shall become an astonishment—Every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished. It is impossible to think on what Babylon was, and to be an eye-witness of what it is, without *astonishment*. On first entering its ruins, Sir Robert Ker Porter thus expresses his feelings: “I could not but feel an indescribable awe in thus passing, as it were, into the gates of fallen Babylon.”³ “I cannot portray,” says Captain Mignan, “the overpowering sensation of reverential awe that possessed my mind, while contemplating the extent and magnitude of ruin and devastation on every side.”⁴

How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder ! How is Babylon become a desolation among the nations ! The following interesting description has lately been given from the spot. After speaking of the ruined embankment, divided and subdivided again and again, like a sort of tangled net-work, over the apparently interminable ground—of large and wide-spreading morasses—of ancient foundations—and of chains of undulated heaps—Sir Robert Ker

¹ Transactions of the Literary Society, Bombay, vol. i. pp. 130. 131.

² Keppel's Narrative, vol. i. p. 175. Jer. li. 58.

³ Sir Robert Ker Porter's Travels, vol. ii. p. 294.

⁴ Mignan's Travels, p. 117.

Porter emphatically adds;—"The whole view was particularly solemn. The majestic stream of the Euphrates wandering in solitude, like a pilgrim monarch through the silent ruins of his devastated kingdom, still appeared a noble river under all the disadvantages of its desert-tracked course. Its banks were hoary with reeds; and the grey osier willows were yet there on which the captives of Israel hung up their harps, and, while Jerusalem was not, refused to be comforted. But how has the rest of the scene changed since then! At that time those broken hills were palaces—those long undulating mounds, streets—this vast solitude filled with the busy subjects of the proud daughter of the East.—Now wasted with misery, her *habitations are not to be found*, and for herself, *the worm is spread over her*."¹

From palaces converted into broken hills;—from streets to long lines of heaps;—from the throne of the world to sitting on the dust;—from the hum of mighty Babylon to the death-like silence that rests upon the grave to which it is brought down;—from the great storehouse of the world, where treasures were gathered from every quarter, and the prison-house of the captive Jews, where, not loosed to return homewards, they served in a hard bondage, to Babylon the spoil of many nations, itself taken from thence, and nothing left;—from a vast metropolis, the place of palaces, and the glory of kingdoms, whither multitudes ever flowed, to a dreaded and shunned spot, not inhabited nor dwelt in from generation to generation, where even the Arabian, though the son of the desert, pitches not his tent, and where the shepherds make not their fold;—from the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, to the taking away of bricks, and to an uncovered nakedness; from making the earth to tremble, and shaking kingdoms, to being cast out of the grave like an abominable branch;—from the many

¹ Sir Robert Ker Porter's Travels, vol. ii. p. 237.

nations and great kings from the coasts of the earth, that have so often come up against Babylon, to the workmen that still cast her up as heaps, and add to the number of pools in her ruins;—from the immense artificial lake, many miles in circumference, by means of which the annual rising of the Euphrates was regulated and restrained, to those pools of water, a few yards round, dug by the workmen, and filled by the river;—from the first and greatest of temples, to a burnt mountain desolate for ever;—from the golden image, forty feet in height, which stood on the top of the temple of Belus, to all the graven images of her gods that are broken unto the ground and mingled with the dust;—from the splendid and luxurious festivals of Babylonian monarchs, the noise of the viols, the pomp of Belshazzar's feast, and the godless revelry of a thousand lords drinking out of the golden vessels that had been taken from Zion, to the cry of wild beasts, the creeping of doleful creatures, of which their desolate houses and pleasant palaces are full, the nestling of owls in cavities, the dancing of wild goats on the ruinous mound as on a rock, and the dwelling-place of dragons, and of venomous reptiles;—from arch upon arch, and terrace upon terrace, till the hanging gardens of Babylon rose like a mountain, down to the stones of the pit, now disclosed to view;—from the palaces of princes who sat on the mount of the congregation, and thought in the pride of their heart to exalt themselves above the stars of God, to heaps cut down to the ground, perforated as the raiment of those that are slain, and as a carcase trodden under feet;—from the broad walls of Babylon, in all their height, as Cyrus camped against them round about, seeking in vain a single point where congregated nations could scale the walls or force an opening, to the untraceable spot on which they stood, where there is nothing left to turn aside, or impede in their course, the worms that cover it; and

finally, from Babylon the Great, the wonder of the world, to fallen Babylon, the astonishment of all who go by it; in extremes like these, whatever changes they involve, and by whatever instrumentality they may have been wrought out, there is not to this hour, in this most marvellous history of Babylon, a single fact that may not most appropriately be ranked under a prediction, and that does not tally entirely with its express and precise fulfilment, while at the same time they all when united show, as may now be seen—reading the judgments to the very letter, and looking to the facts as they are,—the destruction which has come from the Almighty upon Babylon.

And having so clear illustrations of the facts before us, what mortal shall give a negative answer to the question, subjoined by their omniscient Author to these very prophecies?—"Who hath declared this from ancient time? Who hath told it from that time? Have not I the Lord? and there is no God beside me;—declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."¹ Is it possible that there can be any attestation of the truth of prophecy, if it be not witnessed here? Is there any spot on earth which has undergone a more complete transformation? "The records of the human race," it has been said with truth, "do not present a contrast more striking than that between the primeval magnificence of Babylon, and its long desolation."² Its ruins have of late been carefully and scrupulously examined by different natives of Britain, of unimpeachable veracity, and the result of every research is a more striking demonstration of the literal accomplishment of every prediction. How few spots are there on earth of which we have so clear and faithful a picture, as prophecy gave of fallen Babylon at a time when

¹ Isa. xlv. 21; xlv. 10.

² Edinburgh Review, No. i. p. 439.

no spot on earth resembled it less than its present desolate solitary site! Or could any prophecies respecting any single place have been more precise or wonderful, or numerous, or true,—or more gradually accomplished throughout many generations? Or what other spot is there on earth of which all these prophecies would be precisely descriptive? And when they look at what Babylon was, and what it is, and perceive the minute realization of them all—may not nations learn wisdom—may not tyrants tremble—and may not sceptics think?

But smitten by a continual stroke as *Babylon and the land of the Chaldeans* have been, the time is not yet come—while aught of judgment remains to be fulfilled—of which the prophet speaks:—“*The Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land. And it shall come to pass, in the day that the Lord shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve, that thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased!*”¹

¹ Isa. xiv. 1, 3, 4.

CHAPTER XII.

TYRE.

TYRE was the most celebrated city of Phœnicia, and the ancient emporium of the world. Its colonies were numerous and extensive. "It was the theatre of an immense commerce and navigation, the nursery of arts and science, and the city of perhaps the most industrious and active people ever known."¹ In the period of their greatest splendour and perfect independence, Tyre stood at the head of the Phœnician cities.² Carthage, the rival of Rome, was originally one of the colonies of Tyre. While this mart of nations was in the height of its opulence and power, and at least one hundred and twenty-five years before the destruction of old Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar, Isaiah pronounced its irrevocable fall. The pride and wickedness of the Tyrians, their exultation over the calamities of the Israelites, and their cruelty in selling them to slavery, are assigned as the reasons of the judgments that were to overtake them, or as the causes of the revelation of the judgments on their city. And the whole fate of Tyre was foretold.

Ezekiel's description of the commerce, riches, and pride of Tyre, the ancient Queen of the Ocean, is designated by Volney, a valuable historical fragment: and he cites the words, as he terms it, "in all their prophetic enthusiasm." But the prophet denounced its doom before he described its splendour and power; and he traced its future history, with

¹ Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 210. Steph. Dic. p. 2039. Marsham's Can. Chron. p. 304, &c. Strabo, Bochart, &c.

² Heeren's Researches, vol. ii. p. 17.

all the precision of truth, till the city that was perfect in beauty became a place whereon fishers spread their nets, till the stones and timber of its superb dwellings were cast into the midst of the waters; and the very dust was scraped from off the place where the princely merchants gloried in their pride, and heaped up their silver and their gold. The marvellous facts which Ezekiel and other prophets foretold, give, to unobservant minds, the semblance of enthusiasm to their unerring words. And confessedly faithful to the facts, as was "the historical fragment," so also is the prophecy which contrasts with it, as exhibiting the entire reversal of Tyrian magnificence: and the prophetic history of the downfall and ruin of Tyre may be read more fully and clearly in the words of Ezekiel, than its history, prior to its celebrated siege by Alexander the Great, has been recorded in the extant works of profane writers.

Ezekiel's "historical fragment" begins by declaring, "*The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, because that Tyrus hath said against Jerusalem, Aha, she is broken that was the gates of the people; she is turned unto me; I shall be replenished, now she is laid waste. Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God; and it shall become a spoil to the nations, &c.*"¹

The first of the *many nations* that came up against Tyre was the Chaldeans or Babylonians, under Nebuchadnezzar. History, without explicitly recording the facts or

¹ Ezek. xxvi. 1-5.



the result of the siege, relates little else than its duration for thirteen years. The length alone of the siege accords with the historical narration given by Ezekiel at a subsequent period, that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus, till every head was bald, and every shoulder was peeled; yet had he no wages nor his army for Tyrus, for the service that he had served against it.

The vision of the prophet "tarried," but did not fail. It reached, with equal clearness, throughout all future ages. And the time is not yet come respecting which Tyre is finally spoken of in the word of the Lord. But from the height of its dignity, to the depth of its debasement, a "fragment" of the book of the prophetic Scriptures marked out its fate. The confederate Greeks, under their "great king," came up against Tyrus, at an interval of two hundred and seventy years, after its siege by Nebuchadnezzar. And restricting the illustration of the prophecies to recorded and indisputable facts, which are notorious in history, the most unexceptionable testimony is supplied by Arrian and Quintus Curtius, whose names are associated with the history of Alexander and the siege of Tyre,¹ as those of Herodotus and Xenophon with that of Cyrus and the capture of Babylon.

One of the most singular events in history was the manner in which the siege of insular Tyre was conducted by Alexander the Great. Irritated that a single city should alone oppose his victorious march, enraged at the murder of some of his soldiers, and fearful for his fame—even his army's despairing of success could not deter him from the siege. And Tyre was taken in a manner, the success of which was more wonderful than the design was daring; for it was surrounded by a wall one hundred and fifty feet in height, and

¹ See Prideaux, Rollin, Bishop Newton, &c. on the fulfilment of the prophecies concerning Tyre.

situated on an island half a mile distant from the shore. A mound was formed from the continent to the island; and the ruins of *old Tyre*,¹ on the continent, which, according to the word of the prophet Ezekiel, Nebuchadnezzar had besieged and destroyed, afforded ready materials for the purpose. Such was the work, that the attempt at first defeated the power of an Alexander. The enemy consumed and the storm destroyed it. But its remains, buried beneath the water, formed a barrier which rendered successful his renewed efforts. A vast mass of additional matter was requisite. The soil and the very rubbish were gathered and heaped. And the mighty conqueror, who afterwards failed in raising again any of the ruins of Babylon, cast those of Tyre into the sea, and took her very dust² from off her. He left not the remnant of a ruin; and the site of *ancient Tyre* is now unknown,³ or undiscoverable by any of its ruins. Who then taught the prophet to say of Tyre, which *Nebuchadnezzar* besieged, "*They shall lay thy stones and thy timber, and thy dust, in the midst of the water. I will also SCRAPE HER DUST from her. I will make thee a terror, and thou shalt be no more. Though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again.*"⁴

Where *ancient Tyre* flourished in its greatness and pride, not a city, nor town, nor village now stands; and not a house is to be seen over the wide extended space, but a few hovels near a copious fountain, that springs forth as pure and full as ever. Tyre, on the continent, as it existed in the days of the prophets, in all its magnificence and wealth, has wholly vanished, and scarcely a vestige of it remains, but a fragment of a ruined aqueduct. *It is no more.* It

¹ "Magna vis saxorum ad manum erat. *Tyro vetere* præbente." (Quintus Curtius, lib. iv. cap. ix.) See Prideaux, Rollin, Bishop Newton, &c.

² "*Humus aggerabatur.*" (Ibid. cap. xi.) The soil was heaped up.

³ Pococke's Description of the East, b. i. ch. xx. Bishop Newton. Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 212. Buckingham's Travels, p. 46.

⁴ Ezek. xxvi. 4, 12, 21.

may be sought for, but *it cannot be found*. The stones and the timber that formed it, and even its very dust, lie, where the first great king of Grecia cast it, *in the midst of the waters*. It is trodden under foot by every one who now passes over the bare and unobstructed path to the ancient island to which it still unites the shore, now forming a peninsula. The neck of land thus constructed in verification of the prophetic word, is also, according to it, bare like the *top of a rock*, and forms on both sides a beach ever washed by the sea. The fishers of the modern village on the ancient island, literally spread their nets on the sand which covers the surface of the mound, which forms on either side *a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea*. In passing along the shore, once that of the island, the writer, on reaching the south-western extremity of the mound, came suddenly on five or six fishermen, sitting on some prostrate columns, with their nets spread on the sand, at a short distance before them, upon the side of the mole *in the midst of the sea*. On our return some of them had gone away, but the nets were still there; and ere they could be represented on a dauguerreotype plate, it was necessary for the fishermen who remained, to draw their nets a little way along the side of the mole to a ruin, at the base of which lay two granite columns on one side, and three on the other, and to raise the end of the nets as seen in the plate. The very city that was *cast into the sea*, now buried in the waters, having thus served the conqueror's purpose in passing to the previously insular Tyre, has become *a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea*. Thus it is written, in the continuous words of the Lord, *They shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers; I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea: for I have*

*spoken it, saith the Lord God.*¹ It is written also, in the same chapter, of the city or Tyrus on the continent, which was besieged by Nebuchadnezzar, *And they shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise; and they shall break down thy walls, and destroy thy pleasant houses: and they shall lay thy stones, and thy timber, and thy dust, in the midst of the water. And I will cause the noise of thy songs to cease; and the sound of thy harps shall be no more heard. And I will make thee like the top of a rock: thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon; thou shalt be built no more; for I the Lord hath spoken it, saith the Lord God.*² *They shall lament over thee, saying, What city is like Tyrus, like the destroyed in the midst of the sea.*³ And surely the fate of ancient Tyrus is altogether without a parallel.

After the capture of insular Tyre, the conqueror ordered it to be set on fire. Fifteen thousand of the Tyrians escaped in ships. And exclusive of multitudes that were cruelly slain, thirty thousand were sold into slavery.⁴ Each of these facts had been announced for centuries:—*Behold, the Lord will cast her out—he will smite her power in the sea; and she shall be devoured with fire.*⁵—*I will bring forth a fire from the midst of thee—I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth.*⁶ *Pass ye over to Tārshish—pass over to Chittim.*⁷ *The isles that are in the sea shall be troubled at thy departure.*⁸ *Thou shalt die the deaths of them that are slain in the midst of the seas.*⁹ *The children also of Judah, and the children of Jerusalem have ye sold—I will return the recompence upon your own head.*¹⁰

Tyre, on the island, though deprived of its former inhabitants, soon revived as a city, and greatly regained its

¹ Ezek. xxvi. 4, 5.

⁴ Rollin, Bishop Newton, &c.

⁷ Isa. xxiii. 6, 12.

¹⁰ Joel iii. 6, 7.

² Ezek. xxvi. 12–14.

⁵ Zech. ix. 4.

⁸ Ezek. xxvi. 18.

³ Ezek. xxvii. 32.

⁶ Ezek. xxviii. 18.

⁹ Ezek. xxviii. 8.

commerce. It was populous and flourishing at the beginning of the Christian era. It contained many disciples of Jesus, in the days of the apostles. An elegant temple and many churches were afterwards built there. It was the see of the first archbishop under the patriarch of Jerusalem. In the seventh century Tyre was taken by the Saracens; in the twelfth by the Crusaders, at which period it was a great commercial city. The Mamelukes succeeded as its masters; and it remained for three hundred years in the possession of the Turks. But it was not excluded from among the multitude of cities and of countries whose ruin and devastation, as accomplished by the cruelties and ravages of Turkish barbarity and despotism, were foretold nearly two thousand years before the existence of that nation of plunderers. And although it has more lately, by a brief respite from the greatest oppression, risen somewhat from its ruins, the last of the predictions respecting it has been literally fulfilled, according to the testimony of many witnesses. But that of Maundrell, Shaw, Volney, and Bruce, may suffice.

“You find here no similitude of that glory for which it was so renowned in ancient times. You see nothing here but a mere Babel of broken walls, pillars, vaults, &c. Its present inhabitants are only a few poor wretches, harbouring themselves in the vaults, and subsisting chiefly upon fishing, who seem to be preserved in this place by Divine providence, as a visible argument how God hath fulfilled his word concerning Tyre.”¹ “The port of Tyre, small as it is at present, is choked up to that degree with sand and rubbish, that the boats of those fishermen who now and then visit this once renowned emporium, and dry their nets upon its rocks and ruins, can with great difficulty only be admitted.”² And even Volney, after quoting the description of the great-

¹ Maundrell's *Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem*, p. 82. Prideaux, Lowth, Univ. Hist., Bishop Newton.

² Shaw's *Travels*, vol. ii. p. 31. Bishop Newton, &c.

ness of Tyre, and the general description of the destruction of the city, and the annihilation of its commerce, acknowledges that "the vicissitudes of time, or rather the barbarism of the Greeks of the Lower Empire and the Moham-medans, have accomplished this prediction. Instead of that ancient commerce, so active and so extensive, Sour, (Tyre,) reduced to a miserable village, has no other trade than the exportation of a few sacks of corn and raw cotton: nor any merchant but a single Greek factor, in the service of the French of Saide, who scarcely makes sufficient profit to maintain his family." But though he overlooks the fulfilment of minuter prophecies, he relates facts more valuable than any opinion, and more corroborative of their truth:—"The whole village of Tyre contains only fifty or sixty poor families, who live obscurely on the produce of their little ground and a *trifling fishery*. The houses they occupy are no longer, as in the time of Strabo, edifices of three or four stories high,—but wretched huts, ready to crumble into ruins."¹ Bruce describes Tyre as "a rock whereon fishers dry their nets."

After the days of Volney, there were again some houses of two or three stories in new Tyre; but these, like the town and fortress of Safed, and the walls of Tiberias, fell in the earthquake in the year 1834. On our visiting it, ten years thereafter, we sought in vain throughout its few miserable shops, unworthy of the name of bazaars, for anything that could be purchased to be carried away, as a memorial of Tyre. *Tyrus, a merchant of the people for many isles*, that said, I am of perfect beauty, with its *benches of ivory, and fine linen with brodered work from Egypt, and shields and helmets upon its walls round about, and horns of ebony and ivory, whose fairs were replenished with emeralds, purple, and brodered work, and coral, and*

¹ Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 212.

agate, and balm, and wine, and cassia, and calamus, and precious clothes for chariots, and chests of rich apparel, and bright iron, and white wool, and the chief of all spices, and with all precious stones, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold, and all sorts of merchandise, has now nothing to supply: but there are there fishermen who still spread their nets over the bare grave of the once proud Queen of the Ocean, in the midst of the sea.

Of Tyre it was written, *Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities: and in the ruins of Tyre its sanctuaries have their place. Of the celebrated temple of Hercules, not a vestige remains, and its site is unknown. In Christian times, the comparatively modern city could boast of many churches, and a magnificent cathedral, which, as its remains show, was about two hundred and thirty feet in length. All ruined as it is, see plate, it shows, no less than any other in the land, that the sanctuaries have been destroyed, and the altars overthrown, and that the holy places are to this day defiled. In the days of Alexander the Great, the wall of insular Tyre, ere he broke it down, was a hundred and fifty feet in height. Now, the ruins of the cathedral may be seen as they tower over the lowly wall of a miserable village, that now but only serves to defend from wandering Arabs the humble fishermen who ply their predicted task, where the conqueror of the world laboured long and hard to accomplish his, ere he could reach the now broken wall, the ancient girdle of an isle, or cast down one of the columns on which wretched representatives of princely Tyrians sit and watch their outspread nets.*

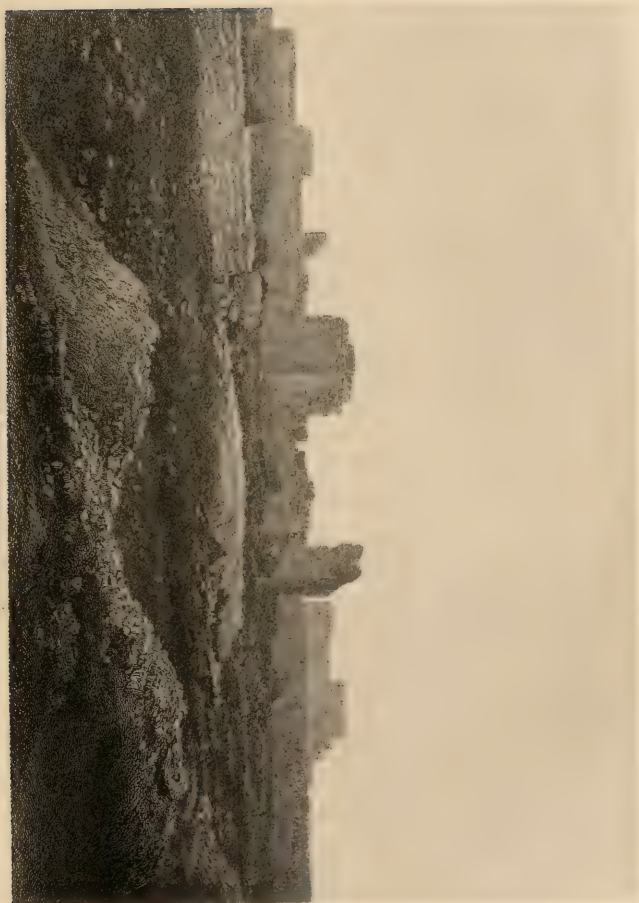
It matters not by what means these “prophecies have been verified;” for the means were as inscrutable, and as impossible to have been foreseen by man, as the event. The

fact is beyond a doubt that they have been literally fulfilled, and therefore the PROPHECIES ARE TRUE. They may be overlooked, but no ingenuity can pervert them. No facts could have been more unlikely or striking, and no predictions respecting them could have been more clear.

"No traveller," says Van de Velde, "can visit this city without being completely convinced that not one single word which the Lord hath said concerning (*against*) Tyre has fallen to the ground."¹ "Even in the more modern Tyre of the middle ages, what has become of her double and triple walls, her lofty towers, her large and massive mansions? Not only have these structures been overthrown, but their very materials have in a great measure disappeared. Tyre has been used as a quarry for the repair of the fortifications of Akka (Acre), and the construction of the modern houses of Beyrout; her stately columns, whose size and material place them beyond the reach of modern architects, have been left where they were cast, 'in the midst of the water.' The sites once occupied by her palaces have been made bare 'as the top of a rock;' the fishermen 'spread their nets' upon the prostrate ruins of her ramparts, her harbours are filled up by drifting sand, her commerce and her wealth have long deserted her; 'what city is like Tyrus, like the destroyed in the midst of the sea?'"²

¹ Van de Velde, p. 191.

² Hand-Book for Syria and Palestine, p. 395.



CHAPTER XIII.

EGYPT.

EGYPT was one of the most ancient and one of the mightiest of kingdoms, and the researches of the traveller are still directed to explore the unparalleled memorials of its power. No nation, whether of ancient or of modern times, has ever erected such great and durable monuments. While the vestiges of other ancient monarchies can hardly be found amidst the mouldered ruins of their cities, those artificial mountains, visible at the distance of thirty miles, the Pyramids of Egypt, without a record of their date, have withstood, unimpaired, all the ravages of time. The dynasty of Egypt takes precedence, in antiquity, of every other. No country ever produced so long a catalogue of kings. The learning of the Egyptians was proverbial. The number of their cities,¹ and the population of their country, as recorded by ancient historians, almost surpass credulity. Nature and art united in rendering it a most fertile region. It was called the granary of the world. It was divided into several kingdoms, and their power often extended over many of the surrounding countries.² Yet the knowledge of all its greatness and glory deterred not the Jewish prophets from declaring, that Egypt shall become *a base kingdom, and never exalt itself any more above the nations*. And the literal fulfilment of every prophecy affords as clear a demonstra-

¹ Twenty thousand. (Herod. lib. ii. cap. clxxvii.)

² Marshami Can. Chron. pp 239, 242.

tion as can possibly be given, that each and all of them are the dictates of inspiration.

Egypt was the theme of many prophecies, which were fulfilled in ancient times; and it bears to the present day, as it has borne throughout many ages, every mark with which prophecy had stamped its destiny:—

“They shall be a base kingdom. It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations: for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations.¹ The pride of her power shall come down.—And they shall be desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities shall be in the midst of the cities that are wasted. I will make the land of Egypt desolate, and the country shall be destitute of that whereof it was full.—I will sell the land into the hand of the wicked: and I will make the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers: I the Lord have spoken it. And there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt.”²

Egypt became entirely subject to the Persians about three hundred and fifty years previous to the Christian era. It was afterwards subdued by the Macedonians, and was governed by the Ptolemies for the space of two hundred and ninety-four years, until, about thirty years before Christ, it became a province of the Roman empire. It continued long in subjection to the Romans—tributary first to Rome, and afterwards to Constantinople. It was transferred, A.D. 641, to the dominion of the Saracens. In 1250 the Mamelukes deposed their rulers, and usurped the command of Egypt. A mode of government the most singular and surprising that ever existed on earth, was established and maintained. Each successive ruler was raised to supreme authority, from being a *stranger* and a slave: no

¹ Ezek. xxix. 14, 15.

² Ezek. xxx. 6, 7, 12, 13; xxxii. 15.

son of the former ruler, no native of Egypt succeeding to the sovereignty ; but a chief was chosen from among a new race of imported slaves. When Egypt became tributary to the Turks in 1517, the Mamelukes retained much of their power, and every pasha was an oppressor and a stranger. During all these ages, every attempt to emancipate the country, or to create a prince of the land of Egypt, has proved abortive, and has often been fatal to the aspirant. Though the facts relative to Egypt form too prominent a feature in the history of the world to admit of contradiction or doubt, yet the description of the fate of that country, and of the form of its government, shall be left to the testimony of those whose authority no infidel will question, and whom no man can accuse of adapting their descriptions to the predictions of the event. Gibbon and Volney are again our witnesses of the facts.

“Such is the state of Egypt. Deprived twenty-three centuries ago of her natural proprietors, she has seen her fertile fields successively a prey to the Persians, the Macedonians, the Romans, the Greeks, the Arabs, the Georgians, and, at length, the race of Tartars distinguished by the name of Ottoman Turks. The Mamelukes, purchased as slaves and introduced as soldiers, soon usurped the power, and elected a leader. If their first establishment was a singular event, their continuance is not less extraordinary. They are replaced by slaves *brought from their original country*. The system of oppression is methodical. Everything the traveller sees or hears, reminds him he is in the country of slavery and tyranny.”¹ “A more unjust and absurd constitution cannot be devised than that which condemns the natives of a country to perpetual servitude, under the arbitrary dominion of *strangers* and slaves. Yet such has been the state of Egypt above five hundred years. The

¹ Volney's Travels, vol. i. pp. 74, 103, 110, 198.

most illustrious sultans of the Baharite and Borgite dynasties were themselves promoted from the Tartar and Circassian bands; and the four-and-twenty Beys, or military chiefs, have ever been succeeded, not by their sons, but by their servants.”¹ These are the words of Volney and Gibbon;—and what did the ancient prophets foretell? *I will make the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hands of strangers: I the Lord have spoken it. And there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt. The sceptre of Egypt shall depart away.* The prophecy adds—*they shall be a base kingdom; it shall be the basest of the kingdoms.* After the lapse of two thousand and four hundred years from the date of this prophecy, a scoffer at religion, but an eye-witness of the facts, thus describes the self-same spot:—“In Egypt there is no middle class, neither nobility, clergy, merchants, landholders. A universal air of misery, manifest in all the traveller meets, points out to him the rapacity of oppression and the distrust attendant upon slavery. The profound ignorance of the inhabitants equally prevents them from perceiving the causes of their evils, or applying the necessary remedies. Ignorance, diffused through every class, extends its effects to every species of moral and physical knowledge. Nothing is talked of but intestine troubles, the public misery, pecuniary extortions, bastinadoes, and murders. Justice herself puts to death without formality.”² Other travellers describe the most execrable vices as common, and represent the moral character of the people as corrupted to the core. As a token of the desolation of the country, mud-walled cottages are now the only habitations where the ruins of temples and palaces abound. Egypt is surrounded by the dominions of the Turks and of the Arabs; and the prophecy is literally true which marked

¹ Gibbon's History, vol. xi. c. lix. p. 164.

² Volney's Travels, vol. i. pp. 190, 198.

it in the midst of desolation:—*They shall be desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities shall be in the midst of the cities that are wasted.*” The systematic oppression, extortion, and plunder, which have so long prevailed, and the price paid for his authority and power by every Turkish pasha, have rendered the country *desolate of that whereof it was full*, and still show both how *it has been wasted by the hand of strangers*, and how *it has been sold into the hand of the wicked*.

*The waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up. And they shall turn the rivers far away; and the brooks of defence shall be emptied and dried up: the reeds and flags shall wither. The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and everything sown by the brooks, shall wither, be driven away, and be no more,*¹ &c. *I will make the rivers dry,—and I will make the land waste,*² &c. “Son of man, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, and to his multitude, Whom art thou like in thy greatness? The waters made him great, the deep set him up on high with her rivers running round about his plants, and sent out her little rivers unto all the trees of the field. Therefore his height was exalted above all the trees of the field, and his boughs were multiplied, and his branches became long, because of the multitude of waters, when he shot forth. Thus was he fair in his greatness, in the length of his branches; for his root was by great waters, &c. I have driven him out for his wickedness. Thou shalt lie in the midst of the uncircumcised, with them that be slain by the sword. This is Pharaoh, and all his multitude, saith the Lord God.”³

The turning far away of the rivers, or of ancient branches of the Nile from their course, and the drying up of the canals, and consequent emptying of the brooks, which

¹ Isaiah, xix. 5-7.

² Ezek. xxx. 12.

³ Ezek. xxxi. 2, 4, 5, 7, 11, 18.

spread fecundity over Egypt, may be ranked among the immediate and most influential causes of the desolation which has spread over the far greater part of Egypt. Wherever, on the banks of the Nile, irrigation is practised, and the little rivers run about the plants, and are sent out unto all the trees of the field, the wonderful luxuriance of the irrigation may well astonish a European: and the sickly green-house plants of our cold and comparatively sunless clime, assume a gigantic form. And partial and narrow as these rich fringes now are, advancing hills of sand, (through the sloping sides of which the stems, and upper branches, and topmost twigs of trees buried, or being buried, may be seen as marking the progress of yet unstayed desolation,) in some places, as at Rosetta, threaten destruction, like that of the felon condemned to stand on the brink of the rising tide. But over great part of Egypt desolation has done its perfect work. The streams of the Nile are now circumscribed within narrow limits to what formerly they were. On the western side of Egypt, as seen in Heath's Plan of Egypt, an "ancient bed of the river Nile, now dry, and called by the natives Bellomah," is distant eighty miles from the nearest branch of that river. The intermediate space, of greater length than breadth, is marked as "immense sandy plains;" and a long canal which partly intersected it, is now "dry, except at the time of the inundation." Along the sea-coast the land is level and destitute of trees. And on the eastern side of Egypt, "the Pelusian branch of the Nile is choked up," and the plain in which it flowed, except in a few stagnant pools, is undistinguished from the sandy desert which now surrounds it on every side. In the intermediate space, and even within the far narrower limits now occupied by the streams of the Nile, the dry lines of the rivers and canals are to be seen, and the desert covers many extensive regions which once raised Egypt among the chief

of the kingdoms. With the exception of the environs of Rosetta and Damietta, and of a few miserable villages, in traversing the once rich Delta of Egypt from one side to another, the traveller, as the writer witnessed, passes through a desert; and where streams once ran about the plants, and the little rivers were sent out among the trees of the field, water skins are a necessary equipage of a traveller, and can only be filled anew, after a journey of eight or ten hours, or of a longer period, and sometimes, too, at an unwholesome stagnant well, of the like of which the cattle in this country would not drink. Assuredly the desert has spread over a large portion of the once fertile land of Egypt. *The land is waste, and everything is withered, where the rivers have been turned far away, and the brooks are emptied and dried up.*

The most recent travellers in Egypt, as in other countries, now see and acknowledge the marvellous fulfilment of the prophecies.

“Long,” says Lord Lindsay, “did we gaze on the scene around and below us, (temple of Carnac at Thebes)—utter, awful desolation! Truly, indeed, has No been ‘rent asunder.’ The towers of the second, or eastern propylon, are mere heaps of stones, ‘poured down,’—as prophecy and modern travellers describe the foundations of Samaria—into the court on one side, and the great hall on the other; giant columns have been swept away like reeds before the mighty avalanche,” &c. “Returning to the great obelisk, and seating myself on the broken shaft of its prostrate companion, I spent some delightful moments in musing over the scene of ruins scattered around me, so visibly smitten by the hand of God, in fulfilment of the prophecies that describe No-Ammon as the scene of desolation I then beheld her. The hand of the true Jove Ammon, Ael-Amunah, the God of Truth, has indeed ‘executed judgments on all the

gods of Egypt,' but especially on his spurious representative, the idol of this most stupendous of earthly temples; silence reigns in its courts; the 'multitude of No' has been cut off; Pathros is 'desolate;'—the land of Ham is still the basest of kingdoms,—so sure is the word of prophecy, so visible its accomplishment!" "We have spent the whole day in visiting the site of Memphis and the pyramids of Dashour and Sacara. Mounds and embankments, a few broken stones, and two colossal statues, disinterred a few years ago by our friend Caviglia, are the solitary remains of the ancient capital of Lower Egypt. We rode for miles through groves of palm and acacia, cultivated fields, and wastes of sand, over what we knew must be the site of Memphis, but every other vestige of her ancient grandeur has disappeared. Noph is indeed 'waste and desolate.'" ¹

"Thus saith the Lord God, I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease out of Noph.—And I will make Pathros desolate, and will set fire in Zoan (marg. Tanis), and will execute judgments in No. And I will pour my fury upon Sin, the strength of Egypt; and I will cut off the multitude of No. And I will set fire in Egypt: Sin shall have great pain, and No shall be rent asunder, and Noph shall have distresses daily. The young men of Aven (Heliopolis), and of Pi-beseth (Pelusium), shall fall by the sword: and these cities shall go into captivity. At Tehaphnehes also the day shall be darkened, when I shall break there the yokes of Egypt; and the pomp of her strength shall cease in her.—Thus will I execute judgments in Egypt; and they shall know that I am the Lord." ²

Though Herodotus numbered the cities of Egypt by thousands, yet all those which existed in the days of the prophets have long been in ruins. Egypt, of old exceedingly rich and populous, is now, except where still partially

¹ Lord Lindsay's Travels, vol. i. pp. 185-189.

² Ezek. xxx. 13-19.

watered by the Nile and cultivated, bare and depopulated. Its two great cities, Cairo and Alexandria, are bordered by the desert. And with the exception of Rosetta and Damietta, and a few miserable villages, not a single town is to be met with, in traversing Lower Egypt from Alexandria to El Arish, or from one extremity to the other. Thebes, once famed for its hundred gates, may be called, from the magnificence of its remains, the metropolis of ruins. The mummies, so abundant at Memphis, remain, though the city has perished; and the human forms which once peopled it, have retained their perfect structure long after its palaces and temples have mouldered into indistinguishable heaps. Heliopolis has now a single erect obelisk to tell that the mounds around it were once the "city of the sun." A single street, with its central square, of the city of Alexandria, built after the era of the prophets, occupied a greater space than the modern city.¹ "At Bubastus, now Tel Basta, the Pi-beseth of Scripture, are lofty mounds, and some remains of the ancient city of Pasht. Many other mounds, in various parts of the Delta, mark the sites of ancient towns."² The author, in hastily passing through Egypt, heard of ruins in various directions, and passed over those of Zoan,³ of which, besides the general desolation that was to come on the cities of Egypt, the prophet said, *I will set a fire in Zoan*. As the Lord wrought wonders of old in the fields of Zoan, so that city (the locality of which is undoubted,) now bears in its ruins the proof of its ancient greatness, and the marks of its prophetic fate. The remains of Zoan being little known, as only partially described by travellers, may be more particularly noticed.

San, or, as pronounced by the Arabs on the spot, Zaan, a

¹ See Heath's Plan of Alexandria.

² Wilkinson's Thebes, p. 347.

³ Arriving late in the day at San (Zoan), my friend the Rev. Andrew Bonar first directed my attention to these ruins.

small fishing village, built of mud and brick, some of the dwellings consisting of the former and some of the latter, is the only representative of this seat of Pharaoh's glory. In its immediate vicinity, but raised considerably above the plain, are the ruins of the ancient city. These, in general, where not buried under sand, consist of large heaps of debris, formed of earth, broken bricks, and tiles in great abundance. The chief remains, all fallen, and lying almost in straight lines, seem to have belonged to the same range of grand and public edifices. On the remote extremity from the village, high sandy mounds render any ruins or buildings invisible, if ever, as in all likelihood, they have existed there. Two fragments of obelisks, the one twenty-seven, the other sixteen feet long, first appear above the sand. At the distance of sixty yards, upwards of twenty large blocks of granite, evidently some portion of an ancient building, lie on the ground, and nearly the same number at a farther similar distance. Besides these last, there are broken fragments of obelisks, covered with rubbish, and a stone figure or image, in a sitting position, eleven feet in height, resting on a block five feet high, and four broad, but lying nearly horizontally, with the head inclined downwards, as if licking the dust. About thirty-six yards farther on, in the same direction, are three broken obelisks, of one of which, the top or upper part, which has been broken off, is twenty-four feet long, lying horizontally, while the lower part, in two other fragments, dips obliquely into the sand. The second obelisk, lying near it, is hid at both extremities, and broken in the middle: though above thirty feet long, it is evident that only a portion of it is seen, the narrowest part of which that is visible, is four feet in diameter. The third is evidently in an unfinished state. And this is a token, among other proofs, that the Lord has been a swift messenger against Egypt, and that his judgments have come upon it

suddenly. At a farther distance of fifty yards, two other obelisks lie contiguous; and at a little distance from these, in a single spot, from seventy to eighty large stones or blocks of granite are crowded together (some of them six feet by four,) most of which are partly hid in the ground, and some scattered around. Fragments of ruins lie over a large extent, and among these many vitrified pieces, larger than those on Gaza, are to be found, clearly indicating that the Lord hath set fire in Zoan.

Can any words be more free from ambiguity, or could any events be more wonderful in their nature, or more unlikely or impossible to have been foreseen by man, than these prophecies concerning Egypt? The long line of its kings commenced with the first ages of the world, and, while it was yet unbroken, its final termination was revealed. The very attempt once made by infidels to show, from the recorded number of its monarchs and the duration of their reigns, that Egypt was a kingdom previous to the Mosaic era of the deluge, places the wonderful nature of these predictions respecting it in the most striking view. And the previous experience of two thousand years, during which period Egypt had never been without a prince of its own, seemed to preclude the possibility of those predicted events which the experience of the last two thousand years has amply verified. Though it had often tyrannized over Judea and the neighbouring nations, the Jewish prophets foretold that its own sceptre should depart away; and that that country of kings (for the numbers of its contemporary as well as successive monarchs may warrant the appellation) would never have a prince of its own; and that it would be laid waste by the hand of strangers. They foretold that it should be a base kingdom, the basest of the kingdoms; that it should be desolate itself, and surrounded by desolation; and that it should never exalt itself any more over the

nations. They describe its ignominious subjection and unparalleled baseness, notwithstanding that its past and present degeneracy bears not a more remote resemblance to the former greatness and pride of its power than the frailty of its mud-walled fabrics now bears to the stability of its imperishable pyramids. Such prophecies, accomplished in such a manner, prove, without a comment, that they must be the revelation of the omniscient Ruler of the universe.¹

On a review of the prophecies relative to Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, and Egypt, may we not, by the plainest induction from indisputable facts, conclude that the fate of these cities and countries, as well as of the land of Judea and the adjoining territories, demonstrates the truth of all the prophecies respecting them? and that these prophecies, ratified by the events, give the most powerful of testimonies to the truth of the Christian religion? The desolation was the work of man, and was effected by the enemies of Christianity; and would have been the same as it is, though not a single prophecy had been uttered. It is the prediction of these facts,

¹ Egypt has indeed risen under its late spirited but despotic pasha, who was both an *oppressor* and a *stranger*, to a degree of political importance and power unknown to it for many past centuries. Yet this fact, instead of militating against the truth of prophecy, may, possibly at no distant period, serve to illustrate another prediction, which implies that, however base and degraded it might continue to be throughout many generations, it would, notwithstanding, have strength sufficient to be looked to for aid or protection, even at the time of the restoration of the Jews to Judea, who will seek "to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt." Other prophecies respecting it await their fulfilment. Yet, whatever its apparent strength may be, it is still but "the shadow of Egypt." (Isa. xxx. 2; xxxi. 1.) The whole earth shall yet rejoice; and Egypt shall not be for ever base. *The Lord shall smite Egypt; he shall smite and heal it; and they shall return to the Lord, and he shall be entreated of them, and shall heal them.—The Egyptian shall serve with the Assyrian. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the earth: whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.* (Isa. xix. 10–25.) Of the time when Israel shall be saved, it is written, *And the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the sceptre of Egypt shall depart away. And I will strengthen them in the Lord; and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith Jehovah.* (Zech. x. 11, 12.) *Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered. . . . Scatter thou the people that delight in war. Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.* (Ps. lxxviii. 1, 31, 32.)

in all their particulars, infinitely surpassing human foresight, which is the work of God alone. And the *ruin of these empires*, while it substantiates the truth of every iota of these predictions, is thus a miraculous confirmation and proof of the inspiration of the Scriptures. By what fatality is it, then, that infidels should have chosen for the display of their power this very field, where, without conjuring, as they have done, a lying spirit from the ruins, they might have read the fulfilment of the prophecies on every spot? Instead of disproving the truth of every religion, the greater these ruins are, the more strongly do they authenticate the Scriptural prophecies; and it is not, at least, on this stronghold of faith that the standard of infidelity can be erected. Every fact related by Volney is a witness against all his speculation; and out of his own mouth is he condemned. Can any purposed deception be more glaring or great, than to overlook all these prophecies, and to raise an argument against the truth of Christianity from the very facts by which they have been fulfilled? Or can any evidence of divine inspiration be more convincing and clear, than to view, in conjunction, all these marvellous predictions, and their exact completion?

CHAPTER XIV.

THE ARABS.

THE history of the Arabs, so opposite in many respects to that of the Jews, but as singular as theirs, was concisely and clearly foretold. It was prophesied concerning Ishmael:—"He will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him: and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. I will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly;—and I will make him a great nation."¹ The fate of Ishmael is here identified with that of his descendants; and the same character is common to them both. The historical evidence of the fact—the universal tradition, and constant boast of the Arabs themselves—their language, and the preservation for many ages of an original rite, derived from him as their primogenitor—confirm the truth of their descent from Ishmael. The fulfilment of the prediction is obvious. Even Gibbon, while he attempts, from the exceptions which he specifies, to evade the force of the fact, that the Arabs have maintained a perpetual independence, acknowledges that these exceptions are temporary and local; that the body of the nation has escaped the yoke of the most powerful monarchies; and that "the arms of Sesostris and Cyrus, of Pompey and Trajan, could never achieve the conquest of Arabia."² But even the exceptions which he specifies, though they were justly stated, and though not coupled with such admissions as invalidate them, would not detract

¹ Gen. xvi. 12; xvii. 20.

² Gibbon's Hist. vol. ix. c. 1. p. 230.

from the truth of the prophecy. The independence of the Arabs was proverbial in ancient as well as in modern times; and the present existence, as a free and independent nation, of a people who derive their descent from so high antiquity, demonstrates that they have never been wholly subdued, as all the nations around them have unquestionably been; and that they have ever dwelt in the presence of their brethren. They not only subsist unconquered to this day, but the prophesied and primitive wildness of their race, and their hostility to all, remain unsubdued and unaltered. "*They are a wild people; their hand is against every man, and every man's hand is against them.*" In the words of Gibbon, which strikingly assimilate with those of the prophecy, they are "*armed against mankind.*" Plundering is their profession. Their alliance is never courted, and can never be obtained; and all that the Turks, or Persians, or any of their neighbours, can stipulate for from them, is a partial and purchased forbearance. It cannot be alleged, with truth, that their peculiar character and manner, and its uninterrupted permanency, are the necessary result of the nature of their country. They have continued wild or uncivilized, and have retained their habits of hostility towards all the rest of the human race, though they possessed for three hundred years countries the most opposite in their nature from the mountains of Arabia. The greatest part of the temperate zone was included within the limits of the Arabian conquests; and their empire extended from the confines of India to the shores of the Atlantic,¹ and embraced a wider range of territory than ever was possessed by the Romans, those boasted masters of the world. The period of their conquest and dominion was sufficient, under such circumstances, to have changed the manners of any people: but, whether in the land of Shinar or in the valleys of Spain, on the banks

¹ Gibbon, vol. ix. c. li. p. 501—vol. x. c. lii. p. 2.

of the Tigris or the Tagus, in Araby the blessed, or Araby the barren, the posterity of Ishmael have ever maintained their prophetic character; they have remained, under every change of condition, a wild people; their hand has still been against every man, and every man's hand against them.

The natural reflection of a recent traveller, on examining the peculiarities of an Arab tribe, of which he was an eye-witness, may suffice, without any art of controversy, for the illustration of this prophecy:—"On the smallest computation, such must have been the manners of those people for more than three thousand years; thus in all things verifying the prediction given of Ishmael at his birth, that he, in his posterity, should be a wild man, and always continue to be so, though they shall dwell for ever in the presence of their brethren. And that an acute and active people, surrounded for ages by polished and luxurious nations, should, from their earliest to their latest times, be still found a wild people, dwelling in the presence of all their brethren (as we may call those nations), unsubdued and unchangeable, is indeed a standing miracle,—one of those mysterious facts which establish the truth of prophecy."¹

¹ Sir R. K. Porter's Travels, p. 304.

The truth of prophecy is not exhausted by accomplished facts concerning the seed of Ishmael. There was a blessing also for that son of Abraham. Kedar and Nebaioth were sons of Ishmael. *All Israel shall be saved, for it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.* (Rom. xi. 26.) In that prophecy it is also written, *All they from Sheba shall come, and they shall show forth the praises of Jehovah. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee. The rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee.—And I will glorify the house of my glory.* (Isa. lx. 6, 7.)

CHAPTER XV.

SLAVERY OF AFRICANS—EUROPEAN COLONIES IN ASIA.

NOT only do the different countries and cities, which form the subjects of prophecy, exhibit to this day their predicted fate, but there is also a prophecy recorded as delivered in an age coeval with the deluge, when the members of a single family included the whole of the human race, the fulfilment of which is conspicuous even at the present time. And while the fate of the Jews and of the Arabs, throughout many ages, has confirmed, in every instance in which the period of their prediction is already past, the prophecies relative to the descendants of Isaac and of Ishmael,—existing facts, which are prominent features in the history of the world, are equally corroborative of the predictions respecting the sons of Noah. The unnatural conduct of Ham, and the dutiful and respectful behaviour of Shem and Japheth towards their aged father, gave rise to the prediction of the future fate of their posterity, without being at all assigned as the cause of that fate. But whatever was the occasion on which it was delivered, the truth of the prophecy must be tried by its completion:—"Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant."¹

The historical part of Scripture, by its describing so particularly the respective settlements of the descendants of

¹ Gen. ix. 25, 26, 27.

Noah, "after their generations in their nations," affords to this day, the means of trying the truth of the prediction, and of ascertaining whether the prophetic character, as given by the patriarch of the post-diluvian world, be still applicable to the inhabitants of the different regions of the earth which were peopled by the posterity of Shem, of Ham, and of Japheth. The *isles of the Gentiles*,¹ or the countries beyond the Mediterranean, to which they passed by sea, viz. those of Europe, were divided by the sons of Japheth. The descendants of Ham inhabited Africa and the south-western parts of Asia. *The families of the Canaanites were spread abroad. The border of the Canaanites was from Sidon.*² The city of Tyre was called the daughter of Sidon; and Carthage, the most celebrated city of Africa, was peopled from Tyre. And the dwellings of the sons of Shem were *unto the east*,³ or Asia. The particular allotment, or portion of each, "after their families, after their tongues, in their countries, after their nations,"⁴ is distinctly specified. And although the different nations descended from any one of the sons of Noah, have intermingled with each other, and undergone many revolutions, yet the three great divisions of the world have remained distinct, as separately peopled and possessed by the posterity of each of the sons of Noah. On this subject the earliest commentators are agreed; before the existence of those facts which give to the prophecy its fullest illustration. The facts themselves, by which the prediction is verified, are so notorious and so applicable, that the most brief and simple statement may suffice. Before the propagation of Christianity, which first spoke peace to earth, taught a law of universal love, and called all men brethren, slavery everywhere prevailed, and the greater part of the human race, throughout all the world, were born to

¹ Gen. x. 5.² Gen. x. 6, 18, 19.³ Gen. x. 30.⁴ Gen. x. 31, 32.—See Mede, Dic. L. p. 277, &c.

slavery, and unredeemed for life. Man can now boast of a nobler birthright. But though long banished from almost all Europe, slavery still lingers in Africa. That country is distinguished above every other as the land of slavery. Slaves at home, and transported for slavery, poor Africans, the descendants of Ham, are the servants of servants, or slaves to others. Yet so unlikely was this fact to have been foreseen by man, that, for centuries after the close of the Old Testament history, inhabitants of Africa disputed with the Romans the empire of the world. But Hannibal, who was once almost master of Rome and of Europe, was forced to yield to and own the fate of Carthage.¹

“God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem.” Some of the ablest interpreters of prophecy, of a former age, conceived that this prediction was fulfilled, not only by the conquests which the Macedonians and the Romans obtained over many of the countries of Asia, but that the promise or blessing of enlargement to Japheth was also verified in a metaphorical sense, by the extension of the knowledge of true religion to the nations of Europe. But it stands not now in need of any questionable interpretation, having received a literal accomplishment. What is at present the relative situation or connexion of the inhabitants of Europe and of Asia, the descendants of Japheth and of Shem? May not the former be said literally to dwell in the tents of the latter? Or what simile, drawn from the simplicity of primeval ages, could be more strikingly graphic of the numerous and extensive European colonies in Asia? And how much have the posterity of Japheth been enlarged within the regions of the posterity of Shem? In how many of their ancient cities do they dwell? How many settlements have they established?—while there is not a single

¹ Livii Hist. lib. xxvii. c. 51. Mede, *ibid*.

spot in Europe the colony or the property of any of the nations whom the Scriptures represent as descended from Shem, or who inhabit any part of that quarter of the world which they possessed. And it may be said, in reference to our own island, and to the immense extent of the British Asiatic dominions, that the natives *of the isles of the Gentiles dwell in the tents of the East!* From whence, then, could such a prophecy have emanated, but from inspiration by Him whose presence and whose prescience are alike unlimited by space or by time?

Whatever events the prophecies reveal, they never sanction any iniquity or evil. The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God, though it be made to praise him. And any defence or attempted justification of slavery, or of man having any moral right of property in man, must be sought in vain from the fulfilment of this prediction. Nebuchadnezzar was the guilty instrument of righteous judgments; and although, in the execution of these, he was the servant of the Lord, it was his own gain and glory which he sought, and after having subdued nations not a few, he was driven from men, and had his dwelling with the beasts. Never were judgments more clearly marked than those which have rested on the Jews in every country under heaven. Yet he that toucheth them toucheth the apple of his eye: and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion shall be the day of the Lord's vengeance, when he will plead with all flesh for his people and for his heritage. And if these examples suffice not to show that it is a wresting of Scripture to their destruction, for any to seek from them the vindication of slavery, because Canaan was to be a servant of servants unto his brethren, yet they who profess to look here to the *Holy* Scriptures for a warrant, because that fact was foretold, should remember, that though Christ was delivered into the hands of his enemies "by the

determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, it was by *wicked hands* that he was crucified and slain." God hath made of one blood all the nations of the earth. And, were the gospel universally and rightly appealed to, no other bond would be known among men but that of Christian brotherhood.¹

¹ It is worthy of remark, that in copies of this treatise, republished and extensively circulated in the Slave States of America, this paragraph was omitted !

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA.

INCOMPLETE as has been the view given in the foregoing pages of the Evidence of Prophecy, yet do not the joint clearness of the prophecies themselves, and the profusion of precise facts which show their literal fulfilment, bid defiance to the most subtle sceptic to forge or feign the shadow of a just reason to prove how they could all have been spoken, except by inspiration of God? The sure word of prophecy has indeed unfolded many a desolation which has come upon the earth; but while it thus reveals the operation, in some of its bearings, of the "mystery of iniquity," it forms itself a part of the "mystery of godliness:" and it is no less the testimony of Jesus, because it shows, as far as earthly ruins can reveal, the progress and the issue of the dominion of "other lords" over the hearts of the children of men. The sins of men have caused, and the cruelty of men has effected, the dire desolations which the word of God foretold. Signs and tokens of his judgments there indeed have been, but they are never to be found but where iniquity first prevailed. And though all other warnings were to fail, the sight of his past judgments, and the sounding of those that are to come, might teach the unrepenting and unconverted sinner to give heed to the threatenings of his word and to the terrors of the Lord, and to try his ways and turn unto God, while space for repentance may be found, ere, as death leaves him, judgment shall find him. And may not the desolations which God has wrought upon the earth, and that accredit his word,

wherein life and immortality are brought to light, teach the man whose God is the world, to cease to account it worthy of his worship and of his love, and to abjure that "covetousness, which is idolatry," till the idol of mammon in the temple within shall fall, as fell the image of Dagon before the ark of the Lord, in which "the testimony" was kept?

But naming, as millions do, the name of Christ, without departing from iniquity, there is another warning voice that may come more closely to them all. And it is not only from the desolate regions where heathens dwelt, which show how holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; but also from the ruins of some of the cities where churches were formed by apostles, and where the religion of Jesus once existed in its purity, that all may learn to know that God is no respecter of persons, and that he will by no means clear the guilty. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

What church could rightly claim or ever seek a higher title than that which is given in Scripture to the seven churches of Asia, the angels of which were the seven stars in the right hand of Him who is the first and the last, of Him that liveth and was dead and is alive for evermore, and that hath the keys of hell and of death; and which themselves were the seven golden candlesticks in the midst of which HE walked? And who that hath an ear to hear, may not humbly hear and greatly profit by what the Spirit said unto them?¹

The CHURCH of EPHESUS, after a commendation of their first works, to which they were commanded to return, were accused of having left their first love, and threatened with the removal of their candlestick out of its place, except they should repent.² Ephesus is situated nearly fifty miles north of Smyrna. It was the metropolis of Ionia, and a great and opulent city, and (according to Strabo) the great

¹ Rev. ii. and iii.

² Rev. ii. 5.

emporium of Asia Minor. It was chiefly famous for the temple of Diana, "whom all Asia worshipped," which was adorned with one hundred and twenty-seven columns of Parian marble, each of a single shaft, and sixty feet high, and which formed one of the seven wonders of the world. The remains of its magnificent theatre, in which it is said that twenty thousand people could easily have been seated, are yet to be seen.¹ But "a few heaps of stone, and some miserable mud cottages, occasionally tenanted by Turks, without one Christian residing there, are all the remains of ancient Ephesus."²—It is, as described by different travellers, a solemn and most forlorn spot. The epistle to the Ephesians is read throughout the world: but there is none in Ephesus to read it now. They left their first love; they returned not to their first works. Their candlestick has been removed out of its place; and the great city of Ephesus is no more.

The CHURCH OF SMYRNA was approved of as "rich," and no judgment was denounced against it.³ They were warned of a tribulation of ten days (the ten years' persecution by Dioclesian), and were enjoined to be faithful unto death, and they would receive a crown of life. And, unlike to the fate of the more famous city of Ephesus, Smyrna is still a large city, containing nearly one hundred thousand inhabitants, with several Greek churches; and an English and other Christian ministers have resided in it. The light has indeed become dim, but the candlestick has not been wholly removed out of its place.

The CHURCH OF PERGAMOS is commended for holding fast the name of the Lord, and not denying his faith, during a time of persecution, and in the midst of a wicked city. But there were some in it who held doctrines, and did deeds,

¹ Acts xix. 29.

² Arundel's Visit to the Seven Churches of Asia, p. 27.

³ Rev. ii. 8-11.

which the Lord hated. Against them He was to fight with the sword of his mouth ; and all were called to repent. But it is not said as of Ephesus, that their candlestick would be removed out of its place.¹ Pergamos is situated to the north of Smyrna, at a distance of nearly sixty-four miles, and “was formerly the metropolis of Hellespontic Mysia.” It still contains at least fifteen thousand inhabitants, of whom fifteen hundred are Greeks, and two hundred Armenians, each of whom has a church.

In the CHURCH OF THYATIRA, like that of Pergamos, some tares were soon mingled with the wheat. He who hath eyes like unto a flame of fire, discerned both. Yet happily for the souls of the people, more than for the safety of the city, the general character of that church, as it then existed, is thus described : “ I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works ; and the last to be more than the first.”² But against those—for such there were among them, who had committed fornication, and eaten things sacrificed unto idols, to whom the Lord gave space to repent of their fornication, and they repented not—great tribulation was denounced ; and to every one of them was to be given according to their works. These, thus warned while on earth in vain, have long since passed, whither all are daily hastening, to the place where no repentance can be found, and no work be done. “ But unto the rest in Thyatira, (as many as have not known the depths of Satan) I will put upon you, saith the Lord, none other burden.”³ There were those in Thyatira who could save a city. It still exists, while greater cities have fallen. Mr Hartley, who visited it in 1826, describes it as “embosomed in cypresses and poplars.” The Greeks are said to occupy three hundred houses, and the Armenians thirty. Each of them has a church.

¹ Rev. ii. 12-16.

² Rev. ii. 19.

³ Rev. ii. 24.

The CHURCH OF SARDIS differed from the churches of Pergamos and Thyatira. They had not denied the faith; but the Lord had a few things against them, for there were some evil doers among them, and on those if they repented not, judgment was to rest. But in Sardis, great though the city was, and founded though the church had been by an apostle, there were only a few names which had not defiled their garments. And to that church the Spirit said, "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." But the Lord is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. And the church of Sardis was thus warned, "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee."¹ The state of Sardis now is a token that the warning was given in vain; and shows that the threatenings of the Lord, when disregarded, become certain judgments. Sardis, the capital of Lydia, was a great and renowned city, where the wealth of Cræsus, its king, was accumulated, and became even a proverb. But now a few wretched mud huts, "scattered among the ruins," are the only dwellings in Sardis, and form the lowly home of Turkish herdsmen, who are its only inhabitants. As the seat of a Christian church, it has lost—all it had to lose—the name. "No Christians reside on the spot."

"And to the angel of the CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know

¹ Rev. iii. 2, 3.

thy works : behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it : for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.— Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world.”¹ The promises of the Lord are as sure as his threatenings. Philadelphia alone long withstood the power of the Turks, and in the words of Gibbon, “at length capitulated with the proudest of the Ottomans. Among the Greek colonies and churches of Asia,” he adds, “Philadelphia is still erect ; a column in a scene of ruins.”² “It is indeed an interesting circumstance,” says Mr Hartley, “to find Christianity more flourishing here than in many other parts of the Turkish empire : there is still a numerous Christian population ; they occupy three hundred houses. Divine service is performed every Sunday in five churches.” Nor is it less interesting, in these eventful times, and notwithstanding the general degeneracy of the Greek church, to learn that the present bishop of Philadelphia accounts “the Bible the only foundation of all religious belief ;” and that he admits that “abuses have entered into the church, which former ages might endure ; but the present must put them down.”³ From the prevailing iniquities of men many a sign has been given how terrible are the judgments of God. But from the fidelity of the church in Philadelphia of old in keeping his word, a name and memorial of his faithfulness has been left on earth, while the higher glories, promised to those that overcame, shall be ratified in heaven ; and towards them, but not them only, shall the glorified Redeemer confirm the truth of his blessed words, “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God ;” even as assuredly as Philadelphia,

¹ Rev. iii. 7, 8, 10.

² Gibbon, vol. xi. ch. lxiv. p. 427.

³ Missionary Register, June 1827.

when all else fell around it, "stood erect," our enemies themselves being judges, "a column in a scene of ruins."

"And unto the angel of the CHURCH OF THE LAODICEANS write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."¹ All the other churches were found worthy of some commendation; and there was some blessing in them all. The church of Ephesus had laboured and had not fainted, though she had forsaken her first love; and the threatened punishment, except she repented, was the removal of her candlestick out of its place. A faithless and wicked few polluted the churches of Pergamos and Thyatira by their doctrines or by their lives; but the body was sound, and the churches had a portion in Christ. Even in Sardis, though it was dead, there was life in a few, who had not defiled their garments; "and they shall walk with me in white," saith the Lord, "for they are worthy."

But in what the Spirit said to the church in Laodicea, there was not one word of approval: it was lukewarm, without exception; and therefore it was wholly loathed. The religion of Jesus had become to them as an ordinary matter. They would attend to it just as they did to other things, which they loved as well. The sacrifice of the Son

¹ Rev. iii. 14-18.

of God upon the cross was nothing thought of more than a common gift by man. They were not constrained by the love of Christ more than by other feelings. They could repeat the words of the first great commandment of the law, and of the second that is like unto it; but they showed no sign that the one or the other was truly a law to them. There was no Dorcas among them, who, out of pure Christian love, made clothes for the poor. There was no Philemon to whom it could be said, "The church in thy house," and who could look on a Christian servant as a "brother beloved." There was no servant who looked to the eye of his Father in heaven more than to that of his master on earth, and to the recompense of eternal reward more than to the hireling wages of a day; and who, by showing all good fidelity, sought to adorn the doctrine of God his Saviour in all things. There was nothing done as everything should be, heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.

They neither felt nor lived as if they knew that whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Their lukewarmness was worse, for it rendered their state more hopeless than if they had been cold. For sooner would a man in Sardis have felt that the chill of death was upon him, and have cried out for life, and called to the physician, than would a man of Laodicea, who could calmly count his even pulse, and think his life secure, while death was preying on his vitals. The character of lukewarm Christians, a self-contradicting name, is the same in every age. Such was the church of the Laodiceans.—But what is that city now, or how is it changed from what it was!

Laodicea was the metropolis of the Greater Phrygia; and, as heathen writers attest, it was an extensive and very celebrated city. Instead of then verging to its decline, it arose to its eminence only about the beginning of the Christian era. It was the mother-church of sixteen bishoprics.

Its three theatres, and the immense circus, which was capable of containing upwards of thirty thousand spectators, the spacious remains of which (with other ruins buried under ruins) are yet to be seen, give proof of the greatness of its ancient wealth and population, and indicate too strongly, that in the city where Christians were rebuked, without exception, for their lukewarmness, there were multitudes who were lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. The amphitheatre was built after the Apocalypse was written, and the warning of the Spirit had been given to the church of the Laodiceans to be zealous and repent; but whatever they there may have heard or beheld, their hearts would neither have been quickened to a renewed zeal for the service and glory of God, nor turned to a deeper sorrow for sin, and to a repentance not to be repented of. But the fate of Laodicea, though opposite, has been no less marked than that of Philadelphia. There are no sights of grandeur, nor scenes of temptation around it now. Its own tragedy may be briefly told. It was lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, and therefore it was loathsome in the sight of God. It was loved, and rebuked, and chastened in vain. And it has been blotted from the world. It is now as desolate as its inhabitants were destitute of the fear and the love of God, and as the church of the Laodiceans was devoid of true faith in the Saviour, and zeal in his service. It is, as described in his Travels by Dr Smith, "utterly desolated, and without any inhabitant, except wolves, and jackals, and foxes."¹ It can boast of no human inhabitants, except occasionally when wandering Turkomans pitch their tents in its spacious amphitheatre. The "finest sculptured fragments" are to be seen at a considerable depth, in excavations which have been made among the ruins;² and Colonel Leake ob-

¹ See Smith's *Survey of the Seven Churches in Calmet's Dict.* Fragments, 320. Bishop Newton, &c.

² Arundel's *Travels*, p. 85.

serves,¹ "there are few ancient cities more likely than Laodicea to preserve many curious remains of antiquity beneath the surface of the soil ; its opulence, and the earthquakes to which it was subject, rendering it probable that valuable works of art were often there buried beneath the ruins of the public and private edifices." A fearful significancy is thus given to the terrific denunciation, "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

"He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." The Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God. Each church, and each individual therein was weighed in the balance of the sanctuary according to their works. Each was approved of according to its character, or rebuked and warned according to its deeds. Was the church itself pure, the diseased members alone were to be cut off. Was the church itself dead, yet the few names, in which there was life, were all written before God, and not one of those who overcame would be blotted out of the book of life. All the seven churches were severally exhorted by the Spirit according to their need. The faith delivered to the saints was preached unto them all ; and all, as Christian churches, possessed the means of salvation. The Son of man walked in the midst of them, beholding those who were, and those who were not his.

By the preaching of the gospel, and by the written word, every man in each of the churches was warned, and every man was taught in all wisdom, that every man might be presented perfect in Christ Jesus. And in what the Spirit said unto each and all of the churches, which he that hath ears to hear was commanded to hear, the promise of everlasting blessedness, under a variety of the most glorious representations, was given without exception, restriction, or

¹ Journal, p. 252.

reservation to him that overcometh. The language of love, as well as of remonstrance and rebuke, was urged even on the lukewarm Laodiceans. And if any Christian fell, it was from his own resisting and quenching the Spirit; from his choosing other lords than Jesus to have dominion over him; from his lukewarmness, deadness, and virtual denial of the faith; and from his own wilful rejection of freely-offered and dearly-purchased grace; sufficient, if sought and cherished, and zealously used, to have enabled him to overcome and triumph in that warfare against spiritual wickedness to which Christ hath called his disciples; and in which, as the finisher of their faith, he is able to make the Christian more than conqueror.

But if such, as the Spirit described them and knew them to be, were the churches and Christians then, what are the churches, and what are Christians now? Or, rather, we would ask of the reader, what is your own hope towards God, and what the work of your faith? If, while Christianity was in its prime, and when its divine truths had scarcely ceased to reach the ears of believers from the lips of Apostles, on whose heads the Spirit had visibly descended, and cloven tongues, like as of fire, had sat; if even at that time, one of the seven churches of Asia had already departed from its first love; if two others were partially polluted by the errors in doctrine, and evils in the practice, of some of their members; if another had only a few names that were worthy, and yet another none; and if they, who formed the last and worst of these, thought themselves rich and increased with goods, and that they had need of nothing; and knew not, that, being lukewarm, they were wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; have you an ear to hear, or a heart to understand such knowledge? and do you, professing yourself a Christian, as they also did, see no cause or warning here to question and examine your-

self—even as the same Spirit would search and try you—of your works, and charity, and service, and faith and patience, and thy works, and the last more than the first?

What is your labour of love, or wherein do you labour at all for his name's sake, by whose name you are called? What trials does your faith patiently endure, what temptations does it triumphantly overcome? Is Christ in you the hope of glory, and is your heart purified through that blessed hope? To a church, we trust, you belong: but whose is the kingdom within you? What principles ever actuate you which Christ and his Apostles taught? Where, in your affections and life, are the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance? Turn the precepts of the gospel into questions, and ask thus, what the Spirit would say unto you, as he said unto the churches?

What the Spirit said unto primitive and apostolic churches, over which “the beloved disciple” personally presided, may suffice to prove that none who have left their first love, if ever they have truly felt the love of Jesus—that none who are guilty of seducing others into sin and uncleanness—that none who have a name that they live and are dead—and that none who are lukewarm, are worthy members of any Christian communion; and that, while such they continue, no Christian communion can be profitable to them. But unto them is “space to repent” given. And to them the word and Spirit speak in entreaties, encouragements, exhortations, and warnings; that they may turn from their sins to the Saviour, and that they may live and not die. But were there one name in Sodom, or a few in Sardis, that are the Lord's, he knows and names them every one; and precious in his sight is the death of his saints. Some, on the other hand, may be sunk into the depths of Satan, though in outward fellowship with a church, were

such to be found, as pure as once was that of Thyatira. Whatever, therefore, the profession of your faith may be, seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness ; that kingdom which is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, and that righteousness which is through faith in Christ, who gave himself for the church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it. And whatever dangers may then encompass you around, fear not—only believe ; all things are possible to him that believeth.

It was by keeping the word of the Lord, and not denying his faith, by hearing what the Spirit said, that the Church of Philadelphia held fast what they had, and no man took their crown, though situated directly between the church of Laodicea, which was lukewarm, and Sardis, which was dead. And dead as Sardis was, the Lord had a few names in it which had not defiled their garments—Christians, worthy of the name, who lived, as you yourself should ever live, in the faith of the Lord Jesus—dead unto sin, and alive unto righteousness : while all around them, though naming the name of Jesus, were dead in trespasses and sins. Try your faith by its fruits ; judge yourselves that you be not judged ; examine yourselves whether you be in the faith ; prove your own selves ; and, with the whole counsel of God, as revealed in the gospel, open to your view, let the rule of your self-scrutiny be what the Spirit said unto the churches.

If you have seen any wonderful things out of the law of the Lord, and have looked, though from afar off, on the judgments of God that have come upon the earth, lay not aside the thought of these things when you now lay down this book. Treat them not as if they were an idle tale, or as if you yourself were not to be a witness—and more than a witness—of a far greater judgment which shall be brought nigh unto you, and shall be your own.

If, in traversing some of the plainest paths of the field of

prophecy, you have been led by a way which you knew not of before, let that path lead you to the well of living waters, which springeth up into everlasting life to every one that thirsts after it and drinks. Let the words of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ be to you this well-spring of the Christian life. Let the word of God enlighten your eyes, and it will also rejoice your heart. Search the Scriptures, in them are no lying divinations; they testify of Jesus, and in them you will find eternal life. Pray for the teaching and the aid of that Spirit by whose inspiration they were given. And above all Christian virtues, that may bear witness of your faith, put on charity, love to God, and love to man, the warp and woof of the Christian's new vesture without a seam; which is the fruit of the Spirit, the end of the commandment, the fulfilling of the law, the bond of perfectness, and a better gift, and a more excellent way than speaking with tongues, or interpreting or prophesying; and without which you would be as nothing, though you understood all mystery and all knowledge. From the want of this the earth has been covered with ruins. Let it be yours, and, however poor may be your earthly portion, it will be infinitely more profitable to you than all the kingdoms of the world, and all their glory. Prophecies shall fail; tongues shall cease; knowledge shall vanish away; the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up; but charity never faileth.

If you have kept the word of the Lord, and have not denied his name, hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. But if heretofore you have been lukewarm, and destitute of Christian faith, and zeal, and hope, and love, it would be vain, in closing a chapter on such a subject, to leave you with any mere human admonition; hear what the Spirit saith, and harden not your heart against the heavenly counsel, and the glorious encourage-

ment given unto you by that Jesus, of whom all the prophets bear witness, and unto whom all things are now committed by the Father :—" I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich ; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear ; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten : be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock : if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

CONCLUSION.

THE whole of the preceding brief and imperfect sketch forms little else than an enumeration of some of the more striking prophecies, and of facts which demonstrate their fulfilment; and a recapitulation of all the particulars would be an unnecessary repetition. The numerous obscure prophecies, which contain much and striking evidence, have hitherto been omitted, that the charge of ambiguity, too generally and indiscriminately attached to them all, might be proved to be unfounded. But, having seen, in hundreds of instances, that prophecies which were plainly delivered, have been as clearly fulfilled, comprehending all in a single argument, and leaving the decision to the enemies of Christianity, or to those who are weak in the faith, and appealing to their reason without bespeaking their favour,—may it not, in the first instance, be asked if it be an easy task which is assigned them, to disprove even this part of the POSITIVE EVIDENCE to the truth of the religion of Jesus? If they have ever staggered at the promises or threatenings of the Scriptures because of unbelief—discrediting all *revelation* from on high—can they not here discern supernatural evidence in confirmation of supernatural truths? May not *sight* lead them to faith? Must they not concede that the Christian has some reason for the hope that is in him? And may they not, at the very least, be led from thence to the calm and unprejudiced investigation, not only of the other prophecies, but of all the evidence which Christianity presents?

It cannot be alleged, with truth, that the prophecies which have been selected are ambiguous; that they bear

the character of those auguries which issued from the cloud that always overhung the temple of Apollo, or of those pretended inspirations which emanated from the cave of Hera. It cannot be denied, that they were all pronounced hundreds or thousands of years before the events, which even at the present day demonstrate their fulfilment, though every other oracle has ceased for ages to appeal to a single fact. And the historical and geographical facts, which were so clearly foretold, are, in general, of so wonderful a nature, that the language of prophecy, though expressive of literal truth, seems at first sight to be hyperbolic; and the prophecies of Isaiah, in particular, have been charged with being "full of extravagant metaphor;"¹ the more extravagant the metaphor, or the more remarkable the predicted fact, the farther are the prophecies removed from all possibility of their having been the words of human invention.

The following comprehensive and luminous statement of the argument, extracted from a review of a former edition of this treatise, is here so apposite, that no apology need be offered for inserting it at length.

¹ Were it not for the impiety with which they are conjoined, the remarks of Paine on the prophecies would, to those who have studied them at all, be sufficiently amusing. He characterises the book of Isaiah as "one continued bombastical rant, full of extravagant metaphor, without application, and destitute of meaning." The predictions respecting Babylon, Moab, &c. are forsooth compared "to the story of the Knight of the Burning Mountain, the story of Cinderella," and such like. Isaiah, in short, "was a lying prophet and impostor." And "what can we say," he asks, "of these prophets, but that they were all impostors and liars?" Such words are not merely harmless; they may be also useful, as they show, that while every possible corroboration from history, fact, reason, and even the unconscious testimony of infidels themselves, is given to the truth of the prophecies, nothing can be alleged on the other hand but what in the sight of all men manifestly is "bombastical rant, and extravagant metaphor, without application, and destitute of meaning." And since both speak not the truth, who is the liar? Isaiah the prophet, or Paine the infidel? And "what can we say" of this stanch assertor of rights, but that *his* right to the title is undisputed, and that these very words of his, were others wanting, must in every "age of reason" rivet to his unblest memory the foul aspersions he so falsely applied? Argument in such a case would be an idle waste of words. But while it would be an act of mere prodigality and folly to cast pearls before swine, the filth which they have snorted out may well be cast into their own kennel again, that they and their kind may partake of what pertains to them.

“ This geographical argument (viz. the fulfilment of those prophecies which describe the future fate of particular nations, and the future aspect of their countries) has always appeared to us one of the most impregnable strongholds of Christian prophecy ; or rather, one of the most resistless and wide-ranging instruments of aggressive evidence. There is no obscurity in the language of the prophet. There is no variety of opinion with regard to the object in his view. There is no denying of the change which he predicts. There is no challenging of the witnesses who prove the facts of the case. The former glory of these regions and kingdoms is recorded by ancient heathen historians, who knew nothing of the fall foretold. Their present state is described by recent and often infidel travellers, who knew often as little of the predictions which they were verifying by their narratives. It is not a particular event which has passed away, or a particular character who has perished, for whose era we must search in the wide page of history, and of whose description we may find so many resemblances as to become perplexed in our application. The places and the people are named by the prophet, and the state in which they now exist is matter of actual observation. The fulfilment of the prediction is thus inscribed as upon a public monument, which every man who visits the countries in question may behold with his own eyes ; and is expressed in a language so universally intelligible, that every man may be said to read it in his own tongue. To these scenes of Scripture prophecy we may point with triumph as to ocular demonstration ; and say to the sceptical inquirer, in the words of the evangelist, ‘ Come and see.’ The multitude of travellers who have recently visited the Holy Land and the adjacent regions, have furnished ample and authentic materials for the construction of so irrefragable an argument. Many of these travellers have discovered no intention of

advocating by their statements the cause of revealed truth ; and some of them have been obviously influenced by hostility to its claims. Yet in spite of these prejudices, and altogether unconsciously on their part, they have recorded the most express confirmation of the Scripture prophecies, frequently employing in their descriptions the very language of inspiration, and bringing into view (though evidently without design) those features of the scene which form the precise picture painted in the visions of the prophet."

Willingly might the Christian here rest his assurance "in the faith once delivered to the saints," and leave to the unbeliever his hopeless creed. But the reasonings of one class of infidels must be combined with the researches of another, to give full force to the *Evidence of Prophecy*; and they jointly supply both the clearest facts and the strongest arguments, and have made ready the means which need only to be applied for bringing the controversy with them, in its various bearings, and in their own words, to a short issue.

The metaphysical speculations of Hume,¹ and the mathe-

¹ It may not be here amiss to allude to that kind and courteous admonition to Christian writers, so meekly given, and with wisdom rivalling its modesty, by this great master of *ideal* philosophy, in which, in order perhaps to bring their arguments to cope the better with his own, he prescribes to them, as best suited to their cause, the total rejection of reason! After quoting a passage from Lord Bacon's works, which has a very different application, he adds,—*This method of reasoning* (about monsters, magic, and alchymy, &c.) *may serve to confound those dangerous friends or disguised enemies of the Christian religion, who have undertaken to defend it by the principles of human reason* (of whom, by the by, Lord Bacon was one, and Sir Isaac Newton another). *Our most holy religion is founded on faith, not on reason; and it is a sure method of exposing it to put it to such a trial as it is by no means fitted to endure.* (Hume's Essays, sect. 10, vol. ii. pp. 136–137, edit. Edin. 1800.) If these words may not justly be retorted against the "unbeliever's creed;" excluding the epithet of holy; or if Mr David Hume was better acquainted with the principles of the Christian Religion than the Author of it, who appealed to the *reason* of men, and asked them why they did not of themselves judge that which was right, and than the apostles Peter and Paul, who enjoin Christians to try all things, and to hold fast that which is good, and to be able to give an answer to every one that asketh them *a reason* of the hope that is in them; then the writer of this treatise, having only the hard alternative of being either "a dangerous friend or disguised enemy of the Christian religion," would, with whatever reluctance, prefer the former, and has to lament the evil he has done, and the "sure method" he has taken "of exposing it." And

mathematical demonstrations of Laplace, which have been directed against the credibility of the miracles, rest entirely on the "*Theory of Probability*." Assuming its logical and legitimate application to the testimony of any supernatural evidence of a divine revelation, it is argued that the *improbabilities* of the occurrence of miracles, being contradictory to uniform experience, are so extreme as to destroy entirely the validity of *any* testimony to their truth which has been transmitted through so many ages. "And upon the whole, we may conclude," says Hume, "that the Christian religion, even at this day, cannot be believed by any reasonable person, without a miracle." What, then, is the evidence, that, even at this day, there are subsisting miracles which must command the belief of every person to the truth of the Christian religion, who is not so utterly unreasonable, and his mind so steeled against conviction, as not to be persuaded even by miraculous demonstration? And in what better or less exceptionable "method" can this evidence be meted out than according to the very "measure of probability" in use with unbelievers; and by means of which they profess to have discovered the deficiency of testimony to the truth of ancient miracles?

Archimedes demanded only a spot whereon to stand, that although he may hope that Christians in their charity will forgive him, he must yet leave to unbelievers the comfort and the joy of the triumph, which, in the exercise of that reason which they have monopolized, these pages must necessarily give them. Or if, on the other hand, in somewhat stricter accordance with the truths of Scripture, the author of the essay on *Human Nature* supplies, by the prefixed words, as clear practical proof, in his "*Academical Philosophy*," or Scepticism in Theory, that it is one of the characteristics of the *heart of man* to be *deceitful above all things*, as mere worldly wisdom and infidelity in practice too frequently demonstrate that it is also *desperately wicked*; and if Scripture prophecy can "endure the trial of reason," and its evidence be rejected,—then the disciples of Hume, the traducers of the Christian religion as not founded on reason, holding to "human nature" as of itself it is, and deriding the idea of its proffered ransom from the guilt and rescue from the power of sin, have need, without exhausting their reason in abstract speculations, to look to their own harder alternative, and (if both be not possibly conjoined) to choose between the incomparable deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the heart within—evils greater far than all that the Christian can ever fear for himself from all the sneers of the sophist, or the railings of the ungodly.

he might move the world. If the most reasonable concession from the infidel be not as impossible to be obtained as the demand of Archimedes; and if he will admit either the truth of his own principles, or the force of mathematical proof, or if his prejudices be not immoveable as a world, the existing and obvious fulfilment of a multiplicity of prophecies might well excite his attention, and convince him of the truth.

The *doctrine of chances*, or calculation of probabilities, has been reduced into a science, and is now in various ways of great practical use, and securely acted upon in the affairs of life. But it is altogether impossible that short-sighted man could select, from the infinite multitude of the possible contingencies of distant ages, any one of such particular facts as abound in the prophecies; and it is manifest that, upon the principle of probabilities, the chance would be incalculable against the success of the attempt, even in a single instance. Each accomplished prediction is a miracle. But the advocate for Christianity may safely concede much, and reduce his data to the lowest terms. And if the unbeliever reckon not his own cause utterly hopeless, and “by no means fitted to endure the trial of reason,” he must grant that there was as great a probability that *each* prediction would *not* as that it *would* have been fulfilled; or that the probabilities were *equal* for and against the occurrence of *each* predicted event. The Christian may fearlessly descend to meet him even on this very lowly ground. And without enumerating all the particulars included in the volume of prophecy respecting the life and character and death of Christ—the nature and extent of Christianity, &c.—the destruction of Jerusalem—the fate of the Jews in every age and nation—the existing state of Judea, of Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Babylon, Tyre, Egypt, the Arabs, &c.—the church of Rome, and the prophetic history which extends

throughout two thousand three hundred years; may it not be assumed (though fewer would suffice, and though incontestable evidence has been adduced to prove more than double the number) that a *hundred* different particulars have been foretold and fulfilled? What, then, even upon these data, is the *chance*, on a calculation of probabilities, that all of them would have proved true—the chance diminishing one-half for every number; or what, in other words, is the hundredth power of two to unity?¹ Such is the desperate hazard to which the unbeliever would trust, that even from these premises, it is *mathematically demonstrable* that the number of chances is far greater against him than the number of drops in the ocean, although the whole world were one globe of water. Let the chance at least be counted before it be confided in. But who would risk a single mite against the utmost possible gain, at the stake on which unbelievers here recklessly put to certain peril the interests of eternity?

But each prediction recorded in Scripture, being a *miracle of knowledge*, is equal to any miracle of power, and could have emanated only from the Deity. “All prophecies are real miracles, and as such only can be admitted as proof of any revelation.”² They may even be said to be peculiarly adapted, in the present age of extended knowledge and enlightened inquiry, for being “the testimony of Jesus;” and

¹ Essai Philosophique sur les Probabilités, par M. le Comte Laplace. Emmerson on Chances, prop. 3. Hutton's edit. of Ozanam's Mathemat. Recr. vol. i. See Gregory's Letters on the Christian Religion, p. 124.

² Hume's Essays, vol. ii. p. 137. This statement of Hume's combined with the manifest truth of prophecy, shows how all his theory against the truth of miracles may easily be overthrown by an admission of his own. Prophecy being true, and uniformity true, and all prophecies being real miracles, miracles are *not* contrary to universal, or even in a restricted sense, to uniform experience. They “are rendered probable by so many analogies,” (Ibid. p. 134,) that on sufficient testimony they become provable, even upon Hume's own principles, especially when the inspiration of those very Scriptures, which record the disputed miracles, is verified by other miracles, the truth of which is established and experienced. And thus the boldest dogmas of scepticism may not only be braved but reversed; and *it is more wonderful that the testimony sealed in blood and rendered credible by miracles equally great, should be false, than that the miracles should be true.*

they cannot justly be viewed as of inferior importance or authority to any miracles whatever.

Though the founder of a new religion, or the messenger of a divine revelation, and his immediate followers, who had to promulgate his doctrine, would give clear and unequivocal proof, by working miracles, that their commission was from on high; yet, the relation between any miraculous event, wrought in after-ages, and a religion previously established, might not be so apparent. Or, even if it were, yet any single and transient act of superhuman power being confined to a particular region, and cognizable only by a limited number, the testimony of these witnesses would be regarded only as secondary evidence, and could not at least in a Christian land be substantiated by proof so complete as that which was sealed by the blood of martyrs. And even if perpetual manifestations of miraculous power (however much men in apparent vindication of their unbelief may unreasonably ask such proof) were submitted to the inspection and experience of each individual in every age, they would only seem to distort the order and frame of nature, and by thus disturbing the regularity and uniformity of her operations, would, from their very frequency, cease to be regarded as supernatural; and influenced by the same sceptical thoughts, those who now demand a sign would then be the first to discredit it. And true to reason and to nature it is, that those who will not believe Moses and the prophets would not be persuaded though one rose from the dead. For the prophecies bear a direct reference to religion that is easily comprehended, and that cannot be misapplied. They have a natural and obvious meaning that may be known and read of all men. "Thus saith the Lord" is their prefix: "this is the fact" is their proof. Instead of being weakened by the greatness of their number, the more they are multiplied, or the more frequently that facts formerly unknown, or events yet future, spring

up in their verification, their evidence is redoubled, and they are ever permanent and existing witnesses that the word is of God. And further, the testimony which in every passing age confirms their truth, cannot be cavilled at; it is not "diluted by transmission through many ages;" it is borne, not to events in themselves miraculous, but to natural facts, whether historical or geographical, which have been proved by conclusive evidence, and which in numerous instances still subsist to stand the test of any inquiry. And even many of the facts (such as the marvellous fate of the expatriated Jews) are witnessed by all, and need no testimony whatever to declare them. And the records of the prophecies, preserved throughout every age, by the enemies of Christianity, are in every hand. If, then, no evidence less exceptionable, more conclusive, or more clearly miraculous could be given, the disciples of Hume, in resigning an "academic" for a Christian faith, have only to apply aright the words of their master—"A wise man proportions his belief to the evidence;"¹ and they may thus find—what he in vain thought that he had discovered—an "everlasting check" against "delusion."²

It was the boast of Bolingbroke, in summing up his "philosophical" labours, that "he had pushed inquiry as far as the true means of inquiry are open—that is, as far as phenomena could guide him." Christian philosophy asks no more. It lays open the "means of inquiry," and presents, in the fulfilment of many prophecies, "phenomena" more wonderful than external nature ever exhibited, and demands only integrity of purpose, and that "inquiry be pushed unto the uttermost," that candour and reason may thus guide the impartial inquirer, by the light of positive evidence and miraculous proof, to the conviction and acknowledgment of the inspiration of the Scriptures.

¹ Hume's *Essay on Miracles*, vol. ii. p. 117.

² *Ibid.* p. 116.

The argument drawn by Volney from "The Ruin of Empires," is completely controverted by facts stated by himself, which, instead of militating against religion, directly establish the truth of prophecy ;—and the unsubstantial fabric which he raised needs no other hand but his own to lay it in the dust.

But ridicule alone has often supplanted reason, and has been held as a test of the truth, and directed especially against the prophecies. And may not an evidence of their inspiration be found even in this last retreat of infidelity? The ruins of the moral world are as obvious in the sight of Omniscience as the ruins of the natural, of cities or of kingdoms : and his word can foretell the one as well as the other. And if those who scoff at religion can perceive no evidence from any historical facts, or any external objects, they might look within, and they would find engraven on their own hearts, in characters sufficiently legible, a confirmation of the prophecies. And if they substitute railing for reason, and think to mar religion with their mockery, to all others they stand convicted, the living witnesses of the truth. "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, ALL THINGS CONTINUE AS THEY WERE FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE CREATION. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." "There shall be mockers in the last time."¹

¹ 2 Peter iii. 3-6. Jude 18.

The Christian religion has thus to rank among its enemies many *false teachers*, who were to arise, and who, as characterized in Scripture, *speak evil of the things that they understand not, who despise government, who are presumptuous and self-willed, who speak great swelling words of vanity to allure others, promising them liberty while they themselves are the servants of corruption, and foaming out their shame.* (2 Peter, chap. ii. verses 1, 10, 12, 18, 19.) Blasphemy, obscenity, and unmeaning abuse, are

But if unbelievers lay just claim to wisdom, and make a fair appeal to reason, then, rather than place their security in abstract speculations, and tamper thus with the immortal hopes of their fellow-men, rather than trust in ridicule as the

the weapons of their warfare: they seek to debase religion into a conformity with their gross and grovelling imaginations; speaking of things that they know not, they utter great swelling words of vanity, as if, by a mere glance of their jaundiced mental vision, they could compass at once the whole of religious truth. But their arguments are as weak as their principles are base. And so manifestly does reason disclaim them, that for subverting their false assumptions, it is only necessary, in general, to make the contradiction as flat as the assertion is positive. As an example, it may be remarked, that in a list of aphorisms which lately issued from the London mart of infidelity, the most specious of the whole was thus expressed,—“All other religions are false, and therefore the Christian religion is false also;” or as the *argument* may be more logically stated, All other religions are false, and therefore the Christian religion is true. Yet who can look but with sorrow for the fate, as well as disgust and derision at the efforts of such pitiful cavillers, carping at the truth of the Christian religion—like unto foul and small fry (the less dignified the more befitting is the simile) nibbling at some weeds that have been cast by human hands upon a rock, and pressing with all their little strength to remove it?

But there is another and a different class of unbelievers, to whom the words in the text no less strikingly apply; for they may be brought to confute the subtlest arguments of the ingenious sceptic, as well as to condemn the profane mockery of the most senseless railer. The great argument of infidelity, urged so strenuously in these *last days*, against the credibility of miracles, from the inviolability of the laws of nature, could not be more plainly or forcibly stated than in the words of the apostle, declaring what that argument, the result of modern science, would be. If it had not been urged, a part of Christian evidence, derived from the fulfilment of this prediction, would still have been wanting, and we should still have had to wait for the last argument of infidelity, from whence to draw a new illustration of the truth. But the apostle not only states, he also confutes what scoffers in the last days would say, and not from Scriptural authority, unavailing with them, but on philosophical principles, or from facts of which they are *willingly* ignorant—viz. the creation of the world, and its having been overflowed by water, which show that all things were not as they were at the *beginning* of the creation. Hume, Bentham, and Laplace, must yet veil their heads, in the academy as well as in the temple, before the humble fishermen of Galilee. And their reasonings need only to be rightly applied, that they may as strongly advocate the undoubted evidence which miracles give, that the doctrine is of God, as the facts attested by Gibbon and Volney demonstrate that the prophecies of Scripture were given by inspiration of God.—But such a subject can only be touched on in a concluding note; and abundant is the *evidence of prophecy*, seeing that it here needs only to be thus noticed. The transference of the leading argument of infidelity—which a text and a fact may suffice to transfer—into an additional and fundamental evidence of the truth, merits a full consideration, more recently given by it to the writer, in a *Demonstration of the Truth of the Christian Religion*.

In these times of inquiry and discovery, it is pleasing to observe how the progress of science becomes ultimately sub-servient to the cause of truth. Philosophy learns to confess its great error, and to offer some expiation to religion. Since the publication of the sixth edition of this treatise, new testimony may now be subjoined to the preceding note, not less important towards the illustration of the evidence of Christianity, than the plates of Petra. *The recent origin of man* is a fact now universally admitted by

test of religious truth, and call an assumed and yet unpaid licence to blasphemy by the name of liberty,—does it not behove them to look first to the positive evidence and miraculous proof of revelation, to detect its fallacy or own its power, and to quit their frail entrenchments, if, indeed, they find that the standard of Christian faith may, in despite of all their efforts, be fixed upon the proudest towers of infidelity? Let them, in the words of the prophet, bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified, or let them hear, and say, It is truth.

But, in conclusion, it may in reason be asked, if there be not something repugnant to the principles of Christianity, in the mind of that man who will not hear Moses and the prophets, and who is slow of heart to believe all that they

geologists; and in the Edinburgh Review (No. civ. p. 396,) it is said, in reference to that fact alone, that “it seems to us to BE FATAL TO THE THEORY which we have presumed to call a *misconception* of the uniformity of causation, as signifying an unalterable sequence of causes and effects”—or, in other words, that it is a demonstration that all things have NOT continued as they were from the beginning of the creation. “Certain strata have been identified,” continues the Reviewer, “with the period of man’s first appearance. We cannot do better than quote from Dr Pritchard’s excellent book, *Researches into the Physical History of Mankind*, his comment and application of this fact. ‘It is well known that all the strata of which our continents are composed were once a part of the ocean’s bed. *There is no land in existence that was not formed beneath THE SURFACE OF THE SEA, or that has NOT RISEN FROM BENEATH THE WATER.* Mankind had a beginning, since we can now look back to the period when the surface on which they lived began to exist. We have only to go back, in imagination, to that age, to represent to ourselves that there existed nothing on this globe but unformed elements, and that in the next period there had begun to breathe, and move in a particular spot, a human creature, and we shall already have admitted, perhaps the most astonishing miracle, recorded in the whole compass of the sacred writings,” &c. Thus, in a better and more philosophic spirit, resting on a *fact*, of which the structure of the earth bears witness, and not on an unwarrantable and false assumption, men, without reference to the prediction, have at last discovered the very argument urged by the apostle in refutation of the sceptical saying of scoffers in the last days. *The heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water.* The earth at first was without form and void. And since the *beginning* of the creation man himself was created. An *unalterable* experience has *not* therefore to be set up against the testimony of the Christian miracles; for there is experience of the truth of “perhaps the most astonishing miracle recorded in the whole compass of the sacred writings.” The argument of the scoffers, and its manifest confutation, are alike confirmations of the truth of prophecy,—itself, too, a miracle. Hume’s argument had previously been advocated in some articles in the Edinburgh Review.

have spoken, though they afforded the means of detection in every prediction which they uttered, if their prophecies had been false,—though they appealed to a vast variety of events which distant ages would bring into existence,—though history has answered, and ocular demonstration has confirmed that appeal, our enemies themselves being witnesses,—and although there *never was* any other truth that could be tried by such a test? Might he not be convinced of a doctrine less moral, or not quite according to godliness, by evidence less miraculous? Is there no reason to fear that the light of evidence, though sufficient to dispel the cloud upon the understanding, is yet unable to penetrate “the veil upon the heart?” Scepticism at best, is not a subject for boasting. It is easy to exclude the noon-tide light by closing the eyes; and it is easy to resist the clearest truth by hardening the heart against it. And while, on the other hand, there are minds (and Newton’s was among the number) which are differently affected by the Evidence of Prophecy, and which cannot be callous, when touched by the concentrated rays of such light from Heaven, whence can this great dissimilarity of sentiment arise from the same identical and abundant proof? And into what else *can* the want of conviction be resolved than into the Scriptural solution of the difficulty—an evil heart of unbelief? “They will not come unto the light, because the light would make them free.”

But while the unbeliever rejects the means of conviction, and rests his hope on the assumed possibility that his tenets may be true,—the positive evidence of Christianity convinces the unprejudiced inquirer, or rational and sincere believer, that it is impossible that his faith can be false. And when he searches out of the book of the Lord, and finds that none of them do fail, he looks on every accomplished prediction, even though it be the effect of the wrath

of man, as a witness of God ; he knows in whom he believes ; he sees the rise and fall of earthly potentates, and the convulsions of kingdoms, testifying of HIM who ruleth among the nations, and accrediting his word ; he experiences the conviction that the most delightful of all truth, the hope which perisheth not, is confirmed by the strongest of all testimony, that Heaven itself hath ratified the peace which it hath proclaimed ; he rests assured that prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost ; and, although he knows not the mode of the operations of the Spirit, he sees the demonstration of his power. And “ taking heed thus unto the sure word of prophecy, until the day dawn and the day-star arise in his heart,” the true believer learns, from the things that are past, the certainty of the things that are to come hereafter : he rests not satisfied with a mere name that he liveth while yet he might be dead ; but having obtained that “ precious faith,” the germ of immortality, which springeth up into eternal life, he experiences the power of the world to come, and unites the practice with the profession of religion ; he copies the *zeal* of those who spend their strength for that which is in vain, and their labour for that which profiteth not, but he directs it to the attainment of an incorruptible inheritance, for he knows that his labour shall not be in vain while he yields obedience to that Word which is the Charter of his Salvation, and which so unequivocally bears the seal and superscription of the King of kings.

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